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Union Berlin names Marie-Louise Eta as head coach, making her 1st female manager of a men's team in a top-5 European league, P 12

Government of Bharat

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Guarantee of 33% Reservation for Women in Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies

Permanent Commission for women in the Armed Forces

At least 1 Woman Director in 48% of the total recognised startups in India

My political secretary likely to quit, says CM

Following the resignation of MLC Abdul Jabbar as chairman of KPCC minority cell chief on Saturday over Davanagere assembly by-election row, chief minister Siddaramaiah said on Sunday that he expected his political secretary, MLC Naseer Ahmed, to also tender his resignation. P 4

TMC's Kabir says '₹1,000cr BJP deal' clip real but edited

TMC MLA Humayun Kabir said a video showing him asking BJP for Rs 1,000cr & calling Muslims gullible is genuine, but said it was edited from a longer recording made at his flat on Dec 19. He accused TMC's Abhishek Banerjee of orchestrating the sting, while Mamata Banerjee highlighted his admission to attack BJP. P 6

NTA checks JEE-M key post chemistry error allegations

NTA is reviewing complaints about alleged errors in JEE Main 2026 Session 2 provisional answer key, especially April 5 Shift 2 chemistry paper. It has asked students not to pay challenge fees yet. Candidates, parents and teachers have reported multiple mistakes. The NTA chief has promised an expert review. P 12

Strait to crisis: Trump orders Hormuz block as talks sink

Truce Will Break If Military Ships Approach: Iran

Chidanand Rajghatta & Agencies

US President Trump on Sunday announced that US Navy will begin a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz with immediate effect after a high-stakes diplomatic mission led by vice president J D Vance ended without an agreement with Iran after night-long talks in Pakistan.

FULL COVERAGE
P 10, PAGE OPP

SUBSTANTIVE TALKS, NO DEAL: VANCE

- Iran says it has full control over Hormuz: **'Enemies will be trapped in a deadly vortex'**
- Iran Prez Pezeshkian says **Putin willing to mediate**
- **China** preparing to **give Iran air def systems**, hints US intel, reports CNN. If so, will slap **'50% tariff'** on China, says Trump
- Iran war has **cost Israel at least $11.5bn** so far, says Israel's finance ministry

Daily Count of Ships Visibly Passing Through Hormuz

Feb 27: 104 → April 12: 7

Source: Bloomberg

> We've had a number of substantive discussions with Iranians, that's the good news. The bad news is that we haven't reached an agreement
> —J D VANCE, IN ISLAMABAD

"The Blockade will begin shortly. Iran will not be allowed to profit off this Illegal Act of EXTORTION. They want money and, more importantly, they want Nuclear. Additionally and, at an appropriate moment, we are fully "LOCKED AND LOADED," and our Military will finish up the little that is left of Iran!" Trump said in a post hours after the inconclusive meeting in Islamabad that saw Vance head home without a deal.

Iran's revolutionary guards said any military vessels trying to approach the strait will be considered a violation of the two-week US ceasefire and be dealt with harshly, adding that Hormuz was under the "smart management" of Iran's Navy. "Hormuz is open for safe passage of non-military vessels in accordance with specific regulations," it said.

Any blockade of the strait, by US or Iran, will almost certainly be illegal under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNLCOS).

▶See PAGE OPPOSITE

Haan, yahi kahenge hum sada, ki dil abhi nahin bhara

Avijit Ghosh

Asha Bhosle, whose voice foregrounded the rebellious notes of desire and abandon in Hindi film music at a time when such attributes were frowned upon in cinema and society, who overcame the looming shadow of her peerless sister Lata Mangeshkar to become the empress of a versatile music universe, and whose voice is sub-consciously part of every Indian's emotional archive, passed away on Sunday. She was 92.

ETERNAL ASHA: P 8

1933-2026

Asha *tai*, as she was fondly called, was admitted to a Mumbai hospital on Saturday following exhaustion and chest infection.

A Dadasaheb Phalke recipient, her career spanned nearly eight decades and more than 11,000 songs; her best rendered under the baton of OP Nayyar and RD Burman.

Rollicking duets (especially with Kishore Kumar), bhajans, ghazals, qawwalis, discos, Indi-pop, Bhosle didn't just sing for every possible genre, she owned them all, enthralling Gen Now and Gen Nehru alike. "All singers are actors. We just act with our voices," she once said.

Her voice was an ideological antonym of her sister's. At its core, Lata's voice personified decorum and goodness, attributes tailor-made for decent leading ladies in the 1950s and 60s while Asha's embodied dissent created space for celluloid social outsiders such as cabaret dancers and gangster's girls.

Nobody also adapted better to the changing trends. And nobody defied age like her. It's scarcely believable that even in 2026, she collaborated with Gorillaz, a virtual British band. An era has ended. But Asha Bhosle is forever.

India calls out China renaming bid in Arunachal

With China undertaking another exercise to rename places in Arunachal Pradesh, India has categorically rejected "any mischievous attempts by the

▶China sets up new county near POK, PG OPP

Chinese side to assign fictitious names to places which form part of the territory of India". MEA said such actions detract from ongoing efforts to stabilise and normalise ties. P 11

J'khand girl murder: Entire police stn staff suspended

ASRP Mukesh & Divy Khare | TNN

Ranchi: All 28 cops at a police station in Jharkhand's Bokaro district were suspended Sunday after the skeletal remains of an 18-year-old girl missing since July last year were found and the murder suspect was arrested — both within days of Jharkhand high court pulling up the DGP and district police over what the victim's mother alleged was a compromised probe.

> I want capital punishment not just for my daughter's killer, I want it for the bada babu (OC) too as he and his team deliberately delayed the probe after taking bribes from the culprit
> — Victim's mother

The suspended officers include Pindrajora police station's officer in-charge Abhishek Ranjan, investigating officer (IO) Aniket Kumar, SIs, ASIs and constables.

▶Cops shielded accused, P 11

Rights that can't be exercised are hollow: CJI Kant

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant said a right that cannot be exercised is nothing more than a promise made on paper. India's justice system does not suffer from absence of rights, he said, but the real challenge is to ensure that they could be meaningfully used. Launching the Nyaya Mitra portal at a two-day conference, the CJI said effort must be to take justice to every doorstep in a form that was accessible, speedy and real. P 12

TMC backs tukde-tukde gang in Parl, streets: PM

Rohit.Khanna
@timesofindia.com

Kolkata: PM Modi during his campaign in north Bengal's Siliguri on Sunday accused the TMC of backing the "tukde-tukde gang", and of "intentionally" keeping the region underdeveloped.

"The tukde-tukde gang wanted to separate the Northeast from the rest of India," he said. "Trinamool supports such groups, in Parliament and on the streets. This is their true face." Modi described the Siliguri corridor connecting the Northeast to the rest of the country "an arm of a strong nation".

Mamata warns of imminent arrests

Mamata Banerjee warned of "operations" to arrest TMC workers ahead of assembly polls. At a polls rally, the Bengal CM also opposed the delimitation bill. P 6

▶Immigration must stop, P 6

No foul play in Kerala girl's death: Docs

Chikkamagaluru: There was no foul play in the death of a Kerala teenage girl, whose body was found four days after she was reported missing in Chikkamagaluru district, doctors said Sunday, quoting from preliminary findings of postmortem exam. The final autopsy report conducted at Araluguppe Mallegowda District Hospital is expected in a couple of days, police said. TNN

▶No narcotics found, P 5

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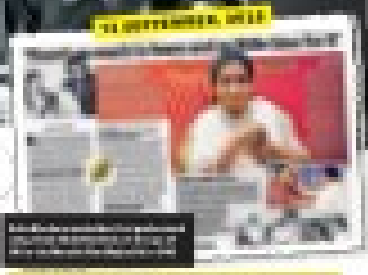
Bangalore Times

To the voice that made every emotion come alive in song

TERE BINA BHI KYA JEENA!

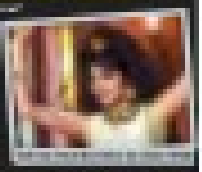
ASHA BHOSLE 1933-2026



Asha Bhosle's most iconic songs over 80 years

Awards and honours

Asha Bhosle & RD Burman - A legendary partnership



She sang in a way that her voice embraced the actress' personality in the film: Asha Parekh

P4

If a small-town guy like me can achieve this, anyone can dream big, says Ganesh

Says Golden Star Ganesh on his 20-year journey in the Kannada film industry

20 YEARS IN CINEMA

Buzzstop

CBFC CALLS HANA NAVAGANIGAAN CLAIMS MISLEADING

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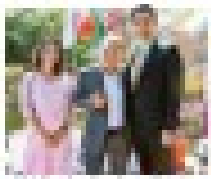
CA Final exam twice a year will reduce stress, improve preparation

ICAI to conduct exams in May and November in 2026

NPS Super 4 students secure nearly 20% of India's medals at SMGF



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From misremembered debut to unused song, Asha Bhosle's Kannada story

S Shyam Prasad

Back in 2010, composer Veer Samarth claimed that on Feb 2 that year, he recorded a song sung by the legendary Asha Bhosle, which was her debut in Kannada. Producer E Krishnappa and his Matte Mungaru film team begged to differ. They got Bhosle to release a statement on video that she had recorded a song for Krishnappa's Kannada movie on Jan 16 earlier in the year, and that rather than the one she sang for Samarth was her Kannada debut. It turns out, both the composer and Bhosle were wrong!

Bhosle, despite enjoying a long career, sang only a handful of songs in Kannada. The yawning gap in the timeline of her various Kannada renditions had slipped from the memory of most, including the singer herself.

SINGING ICON'S EPHEMERAL NUMBERS

1967 | For the film Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna | composed by Lakshman Barlekar

1973 | For Doorada Betta | composed by GK Venkatesh

2010 | For Matte Mungaru | composed by Balaraj

- Asha Nirasha (unreleased)
- Jotegaaranilla (unreleased)

Pics: TOI

UNDYING MEMORY: Asha Bhosle, composer Veer Samarth (R), and lyricist Raghavendra Kamath during the recording of her last song in Kannada. The song was never released

All three Mangeshkar sisters — Lata Mangeshkar, Usha Mangeshkar, and Asha Bhosle — made their Kannada debut in the same film, Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna (1967). Manna Dey also sang a song in the movie, directed by BT Athani. The song sung by Bhosle, 'Yako Yeno Seraga Nillavaldu,' was an item number of its time. But it was Lata Mangeshkar's rendition of 'Bellane Belagayitu' that was the hit track from the album.

The second and most popular number of Bhosle's brief repertoire in Kannada was in Doorada Betta (1973). Incidentally, the film had more than just Bhosle as its Marathi connection. The Kannada film, directed by Siddalingaiah, had taken its basic plot from the 1965 National Award-winning Marathi film Sadhi Mansa.

The song itself was inspired by the Marathi Tamasha theatre. Moreover, popular Marathi actress and dancer Usha Chavan featured alongside Rajkumar in it. Doorada Betta remains an iconic film in Kannada and all three songs, including the one rendered by Bhosle, remain popular even after over 50 years.

It was a good 37 years later, in 2010, that Bhosle sang her next song for a Kannada movie. The 'Helade Kaarana' song for Matte Mungaru was a solo rendering by her, with lyrics penned by Dwarki Raghava, who also directed the film. It was recorded on Jan 16, 2010.

The following month, Samarth recorded a song with the legendary singer at Mumbai's Spectral Harmony studio. The item song 'Jotegaaranilla, Joteyaaru Illa, Jotegaara Ninagaagi Naa Kaadiruve' was penned by Raghavendra Kamath. However, on that date, Samarth was not sure in which film the song would be used. Subsequently, it became a bone of contention between the producers of Mandahasa (Basava Reddy) and Manikya (Prathap Gowda).

The rights were claimed by Gowda but his film never got made. Mandahasa released without the Bhosle song in 2013. So, ironically, the last song she recorded in Kannada remains unused.

According to Samarth, no one wants it now. "After Manikya was dropped, the song remained with me. I offered it to a few filmmakers. But they wanted the lyrics changed or the composition altered because it did not suit their films. It became impossible to use it in any movie," he rued.

Underage, Unchecked, Still Served

TOI Check Finds Poor Enforcement, Easy Access In System That Bends To Biz & Entertains Minor Drinkers

Times News Network

Weeks after Karnataka high court cautioned pubs and breweries against allowing minors access to alcohol, a ground check by **Times of India** indicated that the message has only partially taken hold. Across the city, underage customers continue to enter such establishments and, in several cases, are still being served.

GROUND REALITY

The court's observations came in the wake of the death of a 15-year-old boy earlier this year — a case that spotlighted how minors gain access to nightlife venues. It made clear that establishments cannot evade responsibility if minors are allowed entry and served alcohol, stressing that age verification is both a legal requirement and a moral duty.

However, on the ground, enforcement remains inconsistent. Over multiple visits, **TOI** found underage customers were able to enter several pubs and breweries without checks. Alcohol was served and bills issued. ID verification, where done, was often cursory.

The pattern varied by timing and crowd. On weekdays, checks were largely lax, with staff either skipping verification or conducting superficial scans. On weekends, when footfall peaked, some venues tightened entry protocols. Even then, consistency was missing.

Group behaviour appeared to influence scrutiny. Larger groups, especially mixed ones, were more likely to be waved through without detailed checks. Smaller groups faced relatively stricter screening. "If you're in a big group, they don't look too closely," said a second-year BSc student, who has visited multiple pubs despite being underage.

Loopholes remain easy to exploit. Fake or edited ID cards continue to pass basic checks, particularly where there is no digital verification. At the same time, a section of the industry has tightened its systems. Larger chains and high-profile clubs are increasingly insisting on scannable ID proof, including DigiLocker-based verification, and denying entry where documents do not hold up. "There have been times when we were turned away," said a second-year BA student. "Some places don't take chances anymore."

This split — between stricter chains and lax independent outlets — reflects a wider tension. Karnataka's excise revenue — one of the state's largest income streams — continues to climb, with the state targeting around Rs 45,000 crore for 2026-27. Alcohol remains one of its largest revenue streams, even as the high court pushes for tighter compliance and accountability.

While excise officials say inspections have increased and stricter measures are being put in place, the reality on the ground suggests enforcement still depends heavily on individual establishments. The result is a system where rules exist, but are applied selectively. For every pub that scans IDs and turns minors away, there are others where entry is negotiated at the door, checks are bypassed, and business takes precedence. The HC's warning has raised the stakes, but for now, the city's watering holes continue to operate in a grey zone — where being underage is less a barrier and more a variable.

— Jia Khosla, Nyasa Gupta

Photo for representation

> Whenever such violations are found, we take strict action. It will not be limited to suspension — licence will be cancelled and the establishment will have to re-enter the auction process. We have already issued clear directions through regular meetings, and our teams are monitoring closely. There is zero tolerance for serving or selling liquor to anyone below the age of 21 in Karnataka. Any violation will be treated seriously, and it effectively brings an end to their business
>
> **R Venkatesh Kumar** | EXCISE COMMISSIONER

HOW THE MONEY FLOWS

Year	Excise revenue	Increase
2026-27	45,000 (target)	NA
2025-26	36,492*	NA
2024-25	35,530	901
2023-24	34,629	4,708.60
2022-23	29,920.40	3,542.70
2021-22	26,377.70	3,045.60

Source: Excise dept & budget documents | Figures in Rs crore | *Up to Feb 28, 2026

Group behaviour appears to influence scrutiny of customers at pubs in Bengaluru, with larger groups, especially mixed ones, more likely to be waved through without detailed checks at the door while smaller groups face relatively stricter screening

BCom grad, 24, dies by suicide, blames lover

Bengaluru: A 24-year-old BCom graduate allegedly died by suicide at his house in Yelahanka New Town on April 9, leaving behind a note accusing his lover.

The deceased, Abhishek, stated that he was depressed after being betrayed by his lover. A case of abetment to suicide has been registered. Police said Abhishek was in a relationship with a woman for the past 6-7 years. Before hanging himself, Abhishek made video calls to his lover, informing her that he was ending his life, and also sent her a message on WhatsApp.

In his note, Abhishek mentioned he was madly in love with the woman and she had suddenly broken up with him. He also apologised to his elder brother and friends for not giving them time.

A senior officer said the woman opposed the relationship for the last several months after her parents came to know about it and disapproved. As Abhishek continued to pursue her, allegedly forcing her to continue the relationship, her family approached police. A compromise was made at the station with a warning.

Abhishek wrote the death note in English and hanged himself from a window grill, police said. TNN

(If you are having suicidal thoughts or need emotional support, call these helplines: Tele-MANAS: 14416 or 1800-891-4416; SAHAI Helpline: 080-25497777)

Drunk pub manager attacks cops, nabbed

Times News Network

The man was arrested after he assaulted two policemen during a late-night scuffle outside a bar in Electronics City

Bengaluru: A drunk pub manager, who created a ruckus outside a closed bar on Neeladri Road in Electronics City around 2am on April 8 and assaulted an assistant sub-inspector and a constable, has been arrested.

The accused is identified as Saikumar Reddy, 26, a resident of Gururaghavendra Nagar in JP Nagar 7th Phase. The complaint was filed by ASI Siddarama KS, 45. Siddarama and Mutturaj, 30, were on night patrol duty. Around 1.45am, while patrolling near Neeladri Road, they received a message about a man creating a ruckus outside SLR bar near PCR junction. They rushed to the spot and, when they approached him, found he was intoxicated and repeatedly banging on the shutter of the closed bar. He was shouting abuse and demanding alcohol. He was also abusing the people gathered and passersby.

Reddy yelled at the bar staff, "I need a drink, open the door." He threatened to damage the shutter with a stone. The bar cashier, Ramesh, stepped out and was attempting to calm Reddy, but the situation escalated as the accused began arguing aggressively, claiming he was a "manager of a pub" and demanding liquor.

When Siddarama intervened and told him the bar was closed, the man allegedly turned violent. He abused the officer and constable, grabbed the ASI's uniform, punched him in the face, and tore the shirt in the scuffle.

Mutturaj rushed to assist the ASI, but was allegedly manhandled. Reddy tried to escape, pushing the officers and looking for objects to throw at them, but was taken to the police station in a Hoysala vehicle. During transit, he allegedly continued to shout and threaten the officers, claiming to be a wealthy businessman capable of getting them dismissed from service.

Siddarama, who sustained injuries, was treated at a private hospital. A case was registered against Reddy under Sections 132 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 351 (criminal intimidation), and 352 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). He has been remanded in judicial custody, said police.

Man promised ₹1.7cr in exchange for old currency, duped of ₹6.4L

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Lured by the promise of massive returns for old currency notes and coins, a 67-year-old man was allegedly cheated of Rs 6.4 lakh in a cyberfraud that began on Facebook.

According to the complainant, a resident of Ejipura, on April 6, while scrolling on Facebook, he came across an account, under the name of Rahul Kumar Jindal, advertising high-value deals for old currency collections. Intrigued, he contacted three mobile numbers listed and shared photos of his notes and coins.

After receiving the details and the photos, the crooks claimed they would pay him a staggering Rs 1.7 crore in exchange for the old currency. Soon, the accused began contacting him through multiple phone numbers and convinced him to transfer money in stages under various pretexts such as income tax, TDS, and GST. Between April 6 and April 7, the victim transferred Rs 6,39,000 through RTGS, NEFT, and digital payment applications to different bank accounts provided by the accused.

The crooks told him they would collect the old currency from him but kept demanding more money, citing different reasons. Realising he was duped, he asked them to return his money, and they stopped responding.

A case has been registered under the Information Technology Act and Section 318 (cheating) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at Central cybercrime police station. Efforts are on to freeze the money from the fraudsters' accounts, a senior police officer said.

#DontGetScammed

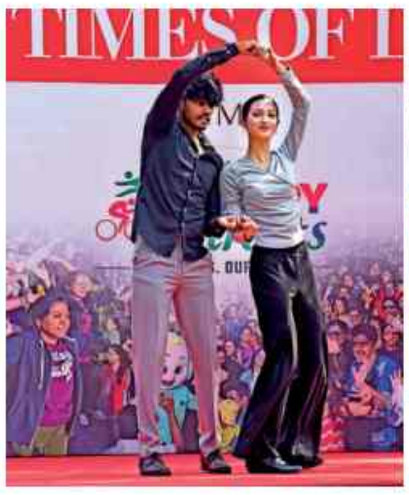
Gift TOI to your loved ones and protect them from scams. Call 85 95 124 124

Community dog adoption drive

Bengaluru Central City Corporation has directed its officials to launch a campaign promoting adoption of community dogs.

At a meeting with animal husbandry officials and NGOs, Daljit Kumar, additional commissioner (development), emphasised that adoption efforts should complement ongoing Animal Birth Control (ABC) and Anti-Rabies Vaccination (ARV) programmes. He also instructed that all dogs be given proper health check-ups and vaccinations prior to adoption.

Additionally, he directed officials to adhere to the guidelines issued by Supreme Court for managing community dogs. Maintaining cleanliness at the ABC centre located within the animal husbandry super specialty hospital premises was also highlighted as a priority. TNN



SUNDAY OF MUSIC, FITNESS & GAMES

Hamsaveni.N
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Pics: Chethan Shivakumar

For the third time in as many weeks, Bhartiya City residents spent their Sunday celebrating with the community as Happy Streets by The Times of India, presented by Bhima Jewellers, turned the area into a community space focused on activity and engagement.

BHIMA presents HAPPY streets — OUR ROADS. OUR WAY.

COLOURS OF COMMUNITY Residents of Bhartiya City came together Sunday as Happy Streets again transformed the neighbourhood into a vibrant hub of community activity and engagement

The morning opened with yoga sessions before shifting to Zumba, where participants across age groups joined in. Live music featuring Kannada songs continued through the event.

Activity stalls drew steady crowds. Prashree Art hosted Mandala sessions, while Vicky's Craft conducted interactive activities. At Reclaim Constitution, visitors engaged with civic themes and picked up copies of the Preamble. NeeRav Arts Village introduced participants to Mudgar fitness. The Postcrossing Society of India encouraged handwritten communication through postcards.

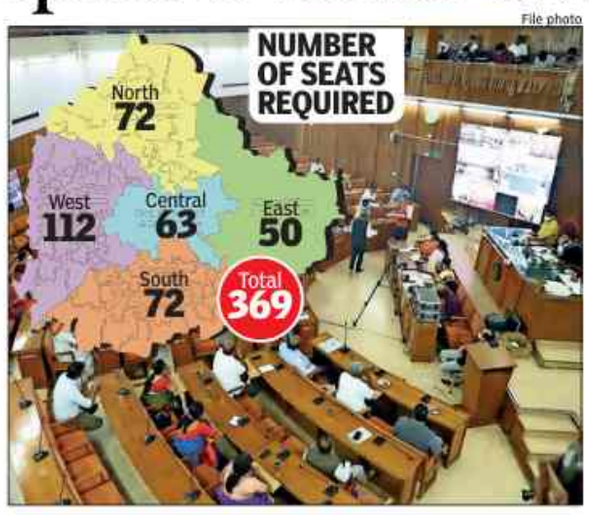
Children participated in face painting, drawing, and craft sessions, with parents joining in. At the play arena, adults revisited games such as tyre rolling, buguri (top), and skipping, introducing them to younger participants.

Residents said the event created space for outdoor engagement. Abhilasha Sharma said it was her first time at Happy Streets and her child enjoyed the activities, adding that such initiatives are important as children lack safe streets due to traffic in the city. Abinash Acharya described it as quality family time and said open street concepts were needed in Bengaluru. Pallavi Kire called it a refreshing way to spend Sunday.

New city corporations on desperate hunt for space to house civic offices

Sanjay.Murty
@timesofindia.com

File photo



Bengaluru: As elections to the five Bengaluru city corporations are approaching, commissioners of the civic bodies are now finding it a challenge to arrange space that can house the elected councils. Of the five corporations, four do not have a dedicated space for the elected councils to conduct sessions out of. The existing council building at NR Square, next to Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) head office, falls under Bengaluru Central City Corporation limits.

Bengaluru North and South city corporations have both earmarked separate funds for the purpose in the recently presented budgets. Both these civic bodies will have 72 corporators each after elections. However, they are yet to come up with concrete plans for their respective head offices and council halls. Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC) commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar said they are looking to hire commercial spaces, preferably along the Airport Road, to house the elected council.

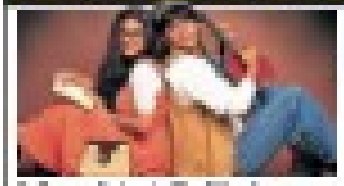
While this option may not be financially sustainable in the long run, BNCC is also planning a permanent head office building that will house the council hall. The commissioner has approached the University of Agricultural Sciences (GKVK) for a 3 to 5-acre plot on which the corporation's office can be constructed. "We have earmarked Rs 40 crore for the office building in our budget this year. As our offices are scattered across Bytarayanapura, Dasarahalli and other areas, we are planning a building that houses all the senior officials as well as the council," Kumar said. However, it is said that the university has not come forward with a positive response.

Meanwhile, South corporation has set aside Rs 150 crore for its own building on a plot opposite Banashankari temple on Kanakapura Road. The corporation currently houses the commissioner's office at Jayanagar 2nd Block, in the building that used to be the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) south zone office.

I'm an aunty. It's a tag I'll happily wear on my sleeve – Deepti Bhatia

UPDATED

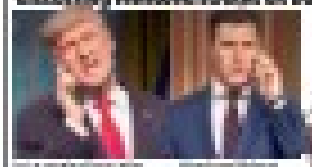
WHAT'S #TRENDING AND WHY

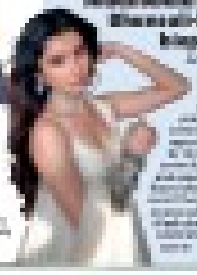


Bollywood's iconic film lifetime Indrani Le revenge saree a spot on the Academy's favourite romance list

Kishwer calls out Mahesh over Epstein claim, says 'inferior' girls

SNL opens with Trump and Pete discussing renewed ties on Iran





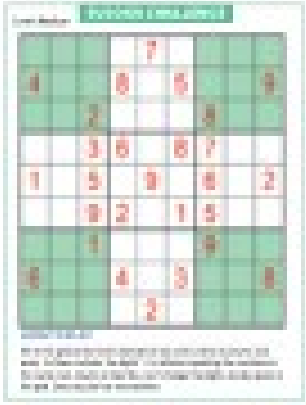
Sara Arjun to play Mandodari in Dhurandhar 2 sequel

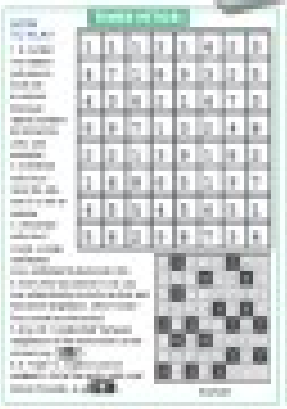
In the land of didis & dadas, we have an aunty problem

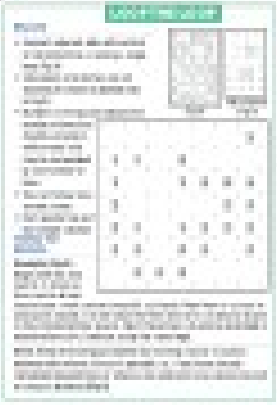
POV

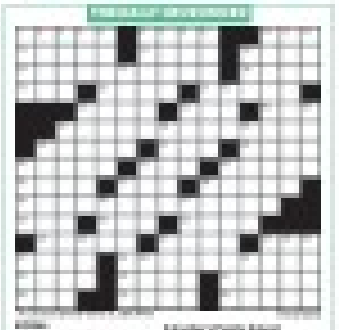
Stefano Gabbana steps down as the chair of Dolce & Gabbana

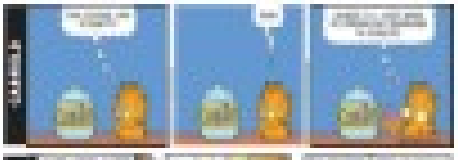
What this means for the company

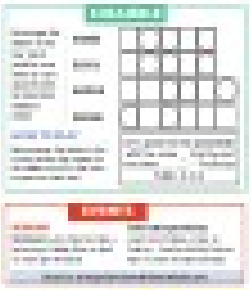


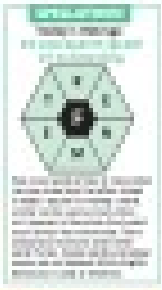


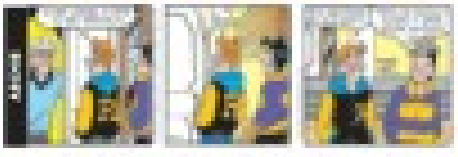


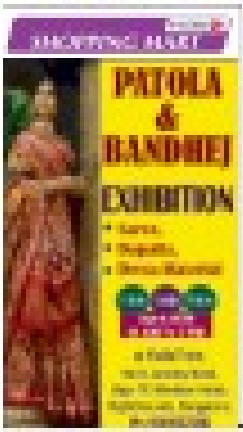


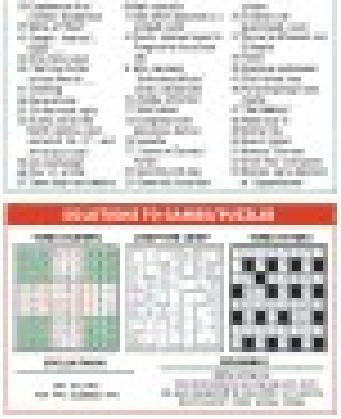












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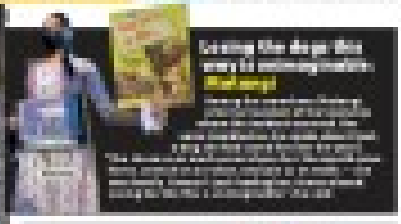
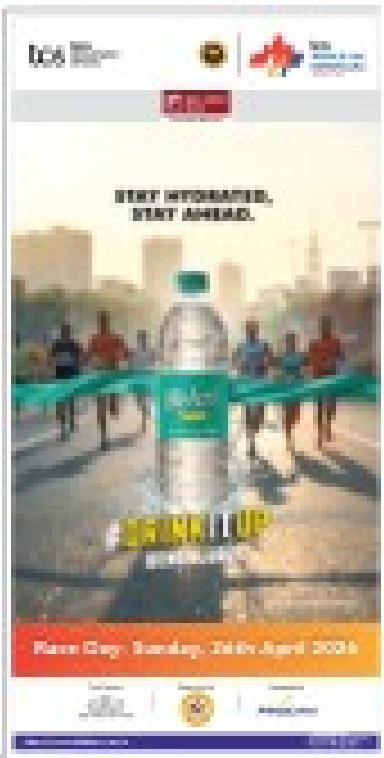
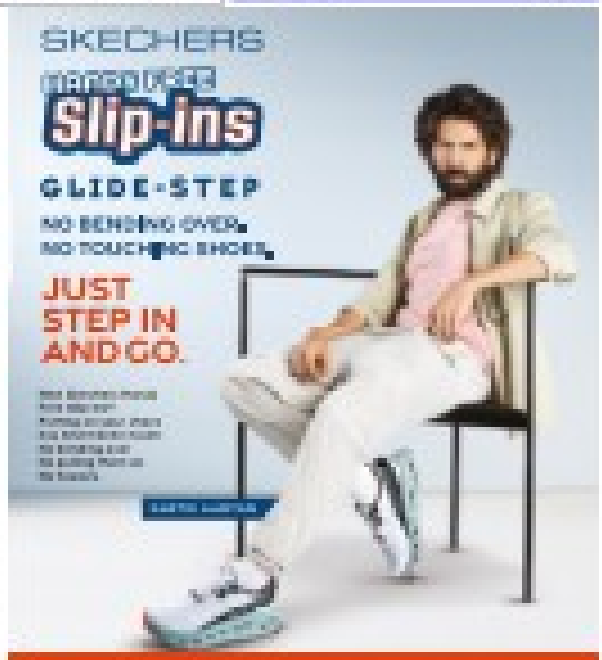
Bengaluru rises in grief and anger for its voiceless







Citing census work, govt may seek to delay GBA elections

Sandeep.Moudgal
@timesofindia.com

Pics: TOI

LET'S PUT IT OFF: File picture of deputy CM DK Shivakumar with Tushar Girinath, former BBMP chief commissioner

Bengaluru: With the Supreme Court's June 30 deadline approaching to conduct elections to the five corporations under Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), previously Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, the govt is considering seeking a postponement, citing the ongoing Census 2027 exercise.

Sources, including officials in the chief minister's office (CMO), suggested plans are afoot to file an affidavit in the Supreme Court requesting a delay. The proposed reason is that GBA officials are currently engaged in Census-related work and may not be able to manage election preparations simultaneously.

The first phase of data collection for Census 2027 — self-enumeration to be followed by home visits by enumerators — in the state began last week and is scheduled to conclude in Sept. The second phase will begin in Feb 2027.

It is learnt that deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar, who holds the Bengaluru development portfolio, and chief secretary Shalini Rajneesh had met chief minister Siddaramaiah to discuss the possibility of seeking a postponement through the Bengaluru development department.

The move also comes against the backdrop of discontent surrounding ward delimitation and the reservation process, both within and outside governing Congress. Officials say an extension will provide the govt much-needed time to address these political concerns.

However, if the Supreme Court declines the request, the govt is likely to urge the Centre to exempt GBA officials from census duties, enabling them to focus on elections.

Any decision on GBA elections is expected to have wider implications, potentially affecting zilla and taluk panchayat polls. With Census operations extending statewide, the govt could seek postponement of these local body elections too.

Both GBA and zilla and taluk panchayat elections have already been significantly delayed. The last zilla and taluk panchayat polls were held in 2016, and BBMP elections in 2015. They were initially put off due to the pandemic and further delayed after the govt decided on delimitation. The State Election Commission has insisted it is ready to draw up electoral rolls once delimitation and reservation are fixed.

CM: No objection to MLAs demanding cabinet rejig

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

FLOWERS AND WAVES: Congress party workers give chief minister Siddaramaiah a rousing reception in Chikkamagaluru on Sunday

Chikkamagaluru: Chief minister Siddaramaiah Sunday said he has "no objection" to legislators meeting the party high command and seeking ministerial berths or a cabinet reshuffle, insisting that it is their "wish".

Senior legislators aligned with Siddaramaiah were planning a two-day trip to Delhi to meet Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, organisation general secretary KC Venugopal, and general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, who oversees Karnataka to press for a rejig.

"There is nothing wrong with ministerial aspirants visiting Delhi," Siddaramaiah told reporters. "Only the high command can take a decision on a cabinet reshuffle. It has been pending for some time. Assembly elections in five states and the budget session had delayed a rejig."

Naseer likely to resign

On Naseer Ahmed resigning as his political secretary, Siddaramaiah admitted that while he hasn't quit, "he might resign".

At a press conference, Saleem Ahmed, Congress chief whip in the legislative council, has accused Naseer Ahmed of "anti-party activities" during the Davanagere South byelection.

Siddaramaiah defended Saleem Ahmed, saying he did not say Congress would lose but only highlighted anti-party activities. "Despite anti-party activities, Congress will emerge victorious," he said.

Meeting on forest rights

Responding to a question on the govt granting permissions to resorts indiscriminately in the Malnad region but not issuing rights to forest dwellers, Siddaramaiah said a meeting would be held soon to discuss several issues, including the forest department issuing rights.

DKS dissolves party's minority cell

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Fissures in Karnataka Congress' minority bloc deepened with DK Shivakumar, party state president, accepting the resignation of Abdul Jabbar from the post of chairman, party minority cell.

Jabbar, also an MLC, resigned Saturday barely 24 hours after a section of minority legislators had, without naming him, accused him of "anti-party activity" during the Davanagere South assembly seat bypoll. On Sunday, Shivakumar dissolved the minority cell and committees associated with it. In a statement, he said "further steps will be taken to form a new committee soon".

Besides Jabbar, Naseer Ahmed, chief minister Siddaramaiah's political secretary and MLC, and housing minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan were also accused of conspiring against Samarth Shamanur, party candidate in Davanagere South.

Siddaramaiah, in Chikkamagaluru, told reporters: "The high command appointed an AICC secretary for the Davanagere South bypoll, and action is being taken based on his report."

While most Muslim functionaries in Congress had pushed for a candidate from the community, the party, citing tradition, decided to give the ticket to a member of the Shamanur family. This had irked Zameer, Naseer and Jabbar, who initially refused to campaign for Samarth. However, Congress insists it will win the seat regardless of the internal tussle.

₹65cr loss but no relief yet

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Though a survey was completed in 2023, victims of the Bakshikere lake breach which inundated large parts of Ramanagara, are yet to receive adequate relief despite repeated appeals, say administrators. The survey pegged losses at Rs 65 crore.

Iqbal Hussain, who represents Ramanagara in the assembly, told **TOI** a breach during heavy rain caused water to enter the town, resulting in massive losses.

RAMANAGARA FLOODING

He said he and delegations personally approached the chief minister a dozen times, and explained the issue in detail, but no relief was provided. He described the lack of a response as "painful".

Dr Jayanna, Ramanagara CMC commissioner, said water entered residences, causing huge damage to property, vehicles and livestock besides destroying property papers and other documents, roads and drains. After the survey was completed a demand note was sent to the govt.

Of the Rs 65 crore, Rs 5.4 crore was allotted, and work on restoring drains and repairing roads was completed.

LPG supply opacity sparks black market apprehensions

Pearl.DSouza@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Although LPG supply to hotels and restaurants has increased to 17,500 commercial cylinders a day, stakeholders warn that the absence of a transparent allocation system and a persistent shortage could fuel black marketing.

Gopal S, a restaurateur in the CBD area who requires 3.5 cylinders a day to serve over 2,000 customers, said he received only three cylinders so far this month.

"We need an app-based booking system for transparency, one that clearly outlines our quota and delivery status. Currently, distributors simply say they have no stock," he said, hinting at possible diversion into the black market.

Umesh Shastry, owner of Rasapaka restaurant in Gandhinagar, echoed similar concerns. "We are entitled to four cylinders, but there is no way to track deliveries or contact a person responsible. There is zero transparency," he said. "We are forced to buy private cylinders at Rs 4,500 each, often without billing. If we close our establishments, it would take at least a month to recover."

WHAT'S THE DISTRIBUTION CRITERIA?

Subramanya Holla, president, Bangalore Hotels Association, said part of the supply gap stems from hotels being linked to distributors who have not issued consumer numbers or certificates. "Allocations are prioritised for those with proper documentation. We are educating our members on this," he said.

Honorary president PC Rao said the issue will be raised in meetings with oil marketing companies.

GK Shetty, president, Karnataka State Hotels Association, told **TOI** that supply has improved to around 70% of requirements , though challenges remain for hotels that had not made prior deposits. "Hotels are now making those deposits, but we urge the govt to increase supply," he said.

The food and civil supplies department said special enforcement teams have been constituted to monitor distribution. So far, 1,429 inspections have been conducted, leading to 29 FIRs, 22 arrests, and the seizure of 1,694 cylinders.

Ash to action: How satellite technology is saving Karnataka's forests

Niranjan.Kaggere
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: While conditions — rising temperatures and dry, hot winds — are ideal for large-scale forest fires in the state, especially in biodiversity-rich Western and Eastern Ghats, Karnataka has successfully contained nearly 90%–95% of reported incidents before they escalated, in the process emerging as a national model in forest fire management.

Officials credit the achievement to the state's adoption of advanced technology and rapid-response systems.

Data from the forest department shows that over 9,000 forest fire alerts have been recorded since Jan 2026, both within forest areas and buffer zones. Officials said most incidents were quickly contained, preventing them from turning into major disasters. The success is largely attributed to a robust early warning system based on satellite monitoring.

The shift to a technology-driven approach from traditional monitoring systems came after devastating fires at Bandipur Tiger Reserve in Feb 2017 and 2019, which together ravaged more than 12,000 acres of forest, claimed the life of a forest watcher, and left several officials injured.

A key change was collaboration with Karnataka State Remote Sensing Application Centre (KSRSAC), which led to the creation of a homegrown forest fire alert system. It now plays a critical role in managing fire incidents.

	Alerts			Reports on action taken			
Year	Within forest	Within buffer	Total	Within forest	Within buffer	Total	% within forest
2020	7,039	3,521	10,560	3,032	1,102	4,134	43%
2021	8,321	3,843	12,164	6,309	2,295	8,604	76%
2022	7,794	4,058	11,852	6,915	2,802	9,717	89%
2023	18,801	4,884	23,685	18,153	4,359	22,512	97%
2024	7,942	3,221	11,163	7,634	2,874	10,508	96%
2025	12,627	5,567	18,194	12,390	5,127	17,517	98%
2026*	6,591	3,007	9,598	6,572	2,949	9,521	99%

*Till Feb | Source: Forest department, GoK

"Forest fires captured by satellites are processed in near-real time at Hyderabad-based National Remote Sensing Application Centre and converted into actionable alerts by KSRSAC, which are disseminated to field staffers within minutes," said Anil Kumar Ratan, additional principal chief conservator of forests (forest resource management). "The alerts include precise geographical coordinates, weather parameters and nearby landmarks, enabling rapid deployment of ground teams. They are transmitted directly to frontline personnel — from beat guards to senior officers — via SMS."

Field personnel are mandated to respond immediately and upload geo-referenced photographs along with action taken reports on an integrated digital platform. This system has significantly improved accountability, with feedback rates rising from 43% in 2020 to 98% in 2025. As of Feb 2026, the department has recorded a feedback rate of 99%.

Officials said nearly 60% of alerts originate from agricultural fields in buffer zones or are linked to controlled burning carried out to create fire lines. In cases where fires are deliberately set, legal action has been initiated against offenders.

"Trained personnel are deployed at the control room who track every alert besides following up with field officials," said Eshwar Khandre, forest minister. "We also receive alerts from citizens via our helpline '1926' which has strengthened our surveillance. Besides, our dept regularly implements preventive measures, like setting up watchtowers in sensitive areas and controlled burning to create and maintain fire lines. We also involve local communities and hire tribal groups as seasonal fire watchers. They are our first line of defence in summer months."

Karnataka has also leveraged historical fire data to develop fire risk zonation maps and weekly fire spread vulnerability forecasts using inputs from the India meteorological department (IMD). Advanced geospatial tools now provide real-time decision support to both field staff and senior officials.

TIMES TRIBUTE

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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS

SAD DEMISE

Thresiamma Chacko
(81 years)
W/o. Late MWO N.A. Chacko
No 40, Gangamma Temple Road, Gangamma Circle, Bangalore

Passed away peacefully and went to be with the Lord on 11th April 2026. Home Viewing will be held on Monday, 13th April from 10.30Am to 12 Noon at her residence in Gangamma Circle, Bangalore.

Funeral Service on Tuesday, 14th April in Kerala.
Funeral service will begin at her residence Natuvazhiparambil House, Munduvelippady Athirampuzha ,Kottayam at 3:00 PM ; followed by funeral service St. Rita's Chapel, Athirampuzha and burial at St. Mary's Forane Church Cemetery, Athirampuzha.

Grieving Family
Agnew Chacko, Siji & family, Meenu Chacko & family James Chacko & family, friends.

Rsvp:
Agnew - 74068 18144
Siji - 95389 62162
https://shorturl.at/sJAXp

REMEMBRANCE
SHARING MEMORIES

2nd Anniversary
In Loving Memory
A. VINAYAKA
03-04-1948 to 13-04-2024
Fondly remembered by Family Members & Friends Mob: 9980678102

Birthday Remembrance
P. GIRIJA
13.04.2026

Little did the world know that an entity would this day be born,whose divine purpose was to seek out lives she could then adorn.
You adorned my life making me grateful for being a chosen one, conceit made me want you as my partner for life even in the next one.
You regretted you couldn't oblige as prophesy had it that you were living out your last life, with equal rigidity I assured you that your soul was destined to return as my wife.
Sadly the evil eyes of providence fell on our deep love and it spitefully chose to intervene, so rudely were you snatched away from me that this life itself with you went in vain.
Happy birthday dear Giri.

- Yours ' Jee ' Gokul

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BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

SHRI. K. SADANANDA SHETTY
Ex - Chairman & Managing Director - Vijaya Bank
We miss you every single day...
soham | miror Women's Midlife & Beyond

OBITUARY

Mrs. Pramila Dorairaju
(Wife of Late Mr. S.Dorairaju, IAS
DOB: 01-01-1943 | DOD: 12-04-2026 (aged 83 years)
It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of *Mrs. Pramila Dorairaju* who departed to be with Lord on **12th April 2026**
Her mortal remains will be kept at her residence:
No.12, 2nd Cross, CSI Compound, Mission Road, Bangalore -560027 on 13th April 2026 between 8:00 AM and 3:30 PM
to pay the last respects.
The funeral cortege will leave the residence at 3:30 PM.
The funeral service will be held at the **Indian Christian Cemetery, Hosur Road, Bangalore (Gate No.1) At 4:30 PM**
Deeply mourned by
Family members, Relatives & Friends
M: 9900063930

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SCAN TO BOOK

Kannada cinema has grown tremendously over the last 20 years: Ganesh

'Working towards films changed my outlook; but I feel viewers refused to take it up'

'I wanted to be part of Nanagaru Muddu as buddy that's actually helped the team find a film producer'

'I want to inspire all the small-town dreamers'

20 YEARS OF KANNADA CINEMA

FILM REVIEWS

A technically strong and emotionally uneasy drama

PETER

Review in short

Should you watch it?

A complex political drama built on fear and faith

TEMBER

Review in short

Should you watch it?

'Paeans will continue to be written about her'

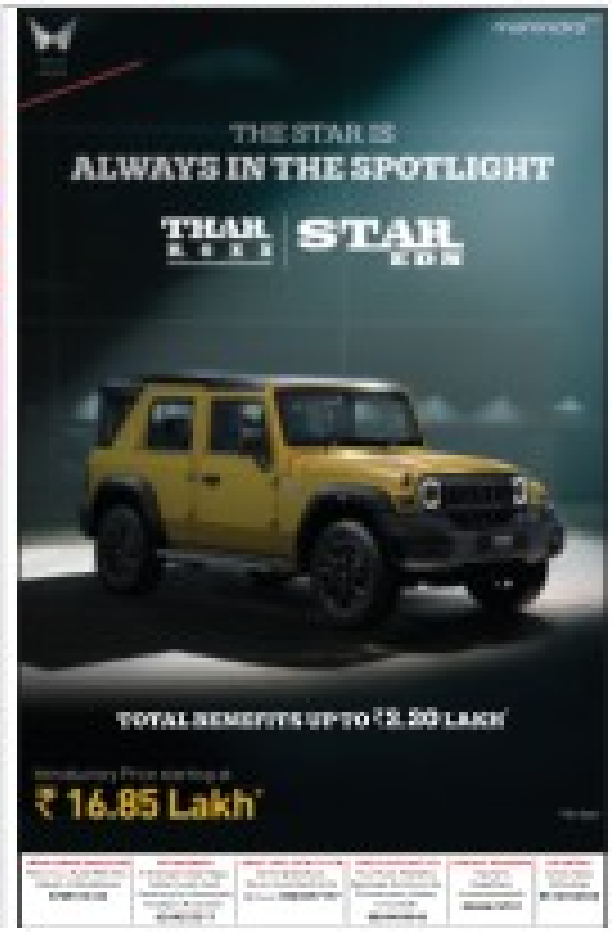
Edited transcript of what you've said in the live

Her enthusiasm and energy are my guiding mantra: Shankar Mahadevan

I had a very special relationship with both Lata Ji and Asha Ji: Hariharan

Her voice will resonate here until the sun and moon exist: Shobana

A festival that will evolve every year: Shah Rukh Khan



Time for institutions to rethink pedagogy for performing arts

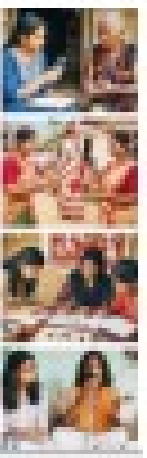
Breaking the mould: Exploring unconventional career pathways

A new wave of candidates prepared to quickly recommission as individuals value human-centric skills

Yoga powers personal well-being and career growth

Govt opens UP overseas education

Linguistic Anthropology gains ground in classrooms, fosters language sensitivity

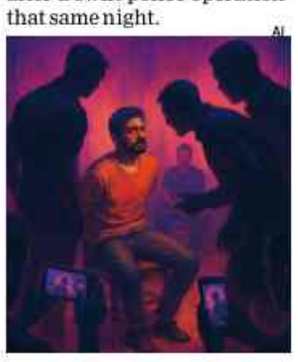


Money fight? College mates abduct student from hostel

Night-long Chase Leads To Arrest Of Four

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: What began as a routine evening among hostel mates turned into a tense, hours-long search after a 19-year-old student was abducted by a group of his own college mates. But fortunately, they were traced and rescued after a swift police operation that same night.


AI

MIDNIGHT HORROR

Rishabh Mohanty, a first-year bachelor of management studies student at Jain Deemed-to-be University, was kidnapped Saturday evening by a gang of four students from the same institution. Acting on a distress call and subsequent complaint, Madiwala police rescued him in three hours and arrested the four.

The arrested are: Aditya Bonsle alias Aditya Roxie, Shaurya Agarwal, Syed Bilal and Nikunj. Mohanty, a native of Odisha, stays at a hostel in BTM Layout 1st Stage.

According to the complaint filed by Yash Jain, a third-year BCA student and Mohanty's hostel mate, the incident unfolded between 7.50pm and 8.10pm. Mohanty was allegedly forced into a car — a Tata Tiago bearing registration number KA-05-NJ-4238, by the group in front of the hostel.

The first sign of trouble came around 8.40pm, when Jain was with another hostel mate, Aditya Mewar, in JP Nagar and received a frantic call alerting them about the abduction. About half an hour later, the situation escalated: a call came from Mohanty's phone, with the caller demanding Rs 50,000 as ransom and threatening to kill him if the money was not paid. It was Mewar who took that call.

Alarmed, the students rushed back and began searching on their own before calling police helpline 112 around 1am, nearly four hours after the abduction. A formal complaint followed, triggering a rapid response.

A special team led by ACP P Vasudev VK and inspector Mohammed MA launched a coordinated operation. Police kept Jain and Mewar in contact with the kidnappers, even asking them to transfer small amounts — Rs 1,000 and Rs 2,000 — to buy time and prevent harm to the victim.

Simultaneously, officers tracked Mohanty's mobile phone, which led them to Bilal's house in Jayanagar. The team moved in and rescued Mohanty. Investigators said Mohanty had been confined inside the house and threatened with an air pistol and a knife. The gang allegedly forced him to choose which weapon to be used to torture him.

"The reason we made the victims transfer around Rs 5,000 in total was to ensure the kidnappers did not harm the victim," a senior officer said. The transfers were part of a tactical decision to keep the kidnappers engaged until his location was confirmed.

Roxie, identified as a former student of the university, is a native of Maharashtra, but he had been claiming to be a local among peers and went by the alias on his social media accounts. The other three accused are currently enrolled at the institution.

During the interrogation, the accused claimed Mohanty owed them money, a claim he has denied. Police said no evidence has yet supported the allegation. The car used in the abduction has been seized, along with the air pistol and knife. All four accused were produced before a magistrate Sunday and remanded in judicial custody.

Stabbed woman succumbs; nephew & associates face murder charge

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A 45-year-old woman who had been undergoing treatment after being stabbed by her nephew and his associates died in the early hours of Sunday, prompting police to upgrade the case from attempt to murder to murder.

The deceased, Mageshwari, was a resident of Adugodi. Police have arrested four persons in connection with the incident: Manikiran, his father Manivannan, and his associates Maniraj alias Stephan and Abhishek.

According to Adugodi police, the attack stemmed from a family dispute. Manikiran was married to Charulata, the daughter of Mageshwari's elder sister.

Following marital discord, Charulata had returned to her parental home and was staying with her grandmother and Mageshwari.

Police said Manikiran had made several attempts to persuade her to return, but she refused. He then allegedly went to Mageshwari's house along with his father and friends in an attempt to take Charulata back with them.

When Mageshwari intervened, the group assaulted her with an iron rod. Manikiran and his associates then stabbed her multiple times on the thigh before forcibly taking Charulata away.

(clockwise L-R) The deceased Mageshwari and accused Manivannan and Manikiran

Mageshwari was initially admitted to St John's Hospital, where doctors said she was out of danger. However, her family later shifted her to Victoria Hospital and then to another hospital due to financial constraints.

Her health condition deteriorated over the following days, and she died around 3am Sunday.

Police said all four accused, who work as labourers, are in the Central Prison, Parappana Agrahara. Based on the death, the case will now be treated as murder.

Man attacks dog for barking at his wife

Bengaluru: A man has been accused of assaulting his neighbour's pet dog in Avverahalli, north Bengaluru, after the animal allegedly barked at his wife.

The incident occurred on the evening of April 11, when the dog barked at a woman from a neighbouring house. Angered by this, her husband later entered the dog owner's residence and attacked the animal.

According to the complaint, the dog, which was tied near the gate, was beaten with a wooden stick and lost consciousness. The owner rushed it to a veterinary hospital, where it received treatment and is now out of danger.

The incident was captured on CCTV cameras installed at the house. Based on the footage and the complaint, a case has been registered at Madanayakanahalli police station. TNN

Drunk man reverses car to reposition it, pins 45-yr-old pedestrian against bus, killing him

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A 45-year-old man was killed in an early morning accident near Satellite Bus Stand (Mysore Road) Sunday after a car reversing at high speed rammed into him and crushed him against a parked bus. The incident occurred around 4.30am and was witnessed by his wife.

The deceased, **M Swamy Dorai**, a pushcart fruit vendor from Siddartha Colony near Srigandhada Kaval, had just returned with his wife Jayashree from Tamil Nadu after attending a relative's funeral. The couple was standing by the roadside, waiting to cross, when the incident took place.

TOI
WRONG MOVE: A marketing executive was reversing the car near Satellite Bus Stand Sunday

Police said a Hyundai i10 (KA-04-MP-9829) had been parked in a designated space between a hotel and the Kerala bus outgoing gate, the owner handed over the keys to a parking attendant.

The accused Balasubramanyam, a marketing executive at a private firm, allegedly took the keys on the pretext of repositioning the vehicle, despite not being authorised to do so. He then reversed the car at high speed, hitting Dorai, dragging him and pinning him against a blood bank bus. Dorai died on the spot. Jayashree collapsed after witnessing the incident. Balasubramanyam fled immediately. Bystanders rushed Dorai to Victoria Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

Later, Byatarayanapura traffic police traced and arrested the accused. An alcometer test showed a reading of 89 gm/100 ml, indicating heavy intoxication.

Based on a complaint filed by Dorai's son, police have registered a case under BNS Section 105 for culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

The accused has been remanded in judicial custody.

New BMTC feeder buses bridge last-mile gap to Yellow Line Metro

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Bengaluru: For residents of Haralur and Kasavanahalli, the Metro just got more accessible. A new BMTC feeder loop — MF-22E and MF-22EA — now connects interior layouts to the Yellow Line.

The initiative builds on earlier efforts to enhance intra-layout connectivity. While HSR Layout has had an internal feeder service for over two-and-a-half years, several adjoining residential pockets remained disconnected even after the Metro's rollout in Aug 2025. This gap prompted residents and citizen groups to advocate for a more inclusive last-mile network linking interior areas to the Yellow Line.

Launched on March 9 with prices ranging from Rs 6 to Rs 25, these buses cover areas with the Yellow Line station as the starting and ending point: Hosa Road Metro station, Choodasandra Circle, Silver County Road, Harluru village, Sarjapur Road, Iblur Junction connecting the Outer Ring Road, 27th Main in HSR Layout, before looping back via Somasundarapalya, Kudlu, Kudlu Metro station and Hosa Road Metro station.

> Most of our roads did not have any last-mile bus service; many were using their personal vehicles causing huge congestion. These feeder services are providing a better way to reach Sarjapur Road to catch other buses to their destination and Hosa Road to board the Metro Yellow Line. However, the buses are not tracked properly on the Namma BMTC app sometimes and the frequency is also an issue at peak hour
>
> **Meera K** | COMMUTER FROM KASAVANAHALLI

> Earlier, I drove a car or two-wheeler through Harlur Road, which was stressful. Now, I just step out from Silver County Road, track the bus on the BMTC app, pay around ₹10, and hop on. The first ride was liberating — I could sit, relax and even work on my laptop. Now, I don't feel like going back to using my car or bike
>
> **Bishnu Reddy** | WHO USES THE FEEDER BUS TO HOSA ROAD METRO STATION

TOI
HASSLE-FREE TRAVEL: Commuters say these feeder buses save them from stress of driving in traffic

> To meet the growing demand from commuters following the launch of the Yellow Line, we introduced this service. Since it is newly launched, we are currently monitoring ridership to gauge public response. If demand increases, we plan to expand the service
>
> **— A BMTC spokesperson**

The route specifically serves localities such as Harluru, Kasavanahalli and other nearby interior stretches that previously had no bus connectivity, largely due to narrow roads. Despite this, these neighbourhoods have seen rapid residential growth, with an estimated 6,000 to 10,000 apartments and a rising commuter base.

Lalithamba BV, civic volunteer, Community Task Force, said: "This was important because large interior areas like Harluru had absolutely no bus connectivity despite a huge residential population, forcing people to rely on private vehicles even for short distances. The idea was to connect these pockets to the Yellow Line and main roads, reducing congestion."

At present, three buses operate during peak hours on the route, with a frequency of 35-40 minutes. While initial response has been encouraging, organisers say usage is still gradually picking up, partly due to school holidays and limited awareness. To address this, citizen groups have been actively promoting the service through social media and on-ground outreach.

Mukund Kumar, founding member, Save Our Sarjapur campaign, said: "We're working with BMTC to resolve operational issues like bus tracking, schedules and stop locations. We're also pushing for improvements such as better bus stop placement near large residential clusters. Ultimately, reducing congestion will require both better public transport and a shift away from single-occupancy private vehicle use, and this feeder service is an important starting point."

Co-op society staffer alleges caste abuse

An employee of a cooperative society in Mangaluru has alleged caste-based abuse by the branch manager incharge. The 47-year-old woman stated in a complaint that on April 2, while she was on duty, the branch in-charge manager, Yathish D Gowda, allegedly came to the office and suddenly instructed her not to perform her duties.

When she objected, the accused reportedly pushed her and subjected her to caste-based abuse. Subsequently, on April 7, when she returned to work, she was again obstructed from discharging her duties. Distressed by the incident, she reportedly fell ill and collapsed in the office, following which staff members shifted her to a hospital.

Based on the complaint filed Saturday against office-bearers Yashodha, Pushparaj Chowta and Yathish D Gowda, a case has been registered. TNN

Girl's death: No narcotics found, say cops

▶ Continued from page 1

Viscera samples have been sent to a forensic lab for examination and its report is awaited.

Shreenanda, missing from Manikyadhara Hill on April 7, was found dead near a waterfall some distance away on April 10. The girl, along with her family members, was on a trip to Karnataka.

Following allegations from parents that the teen may have been drugged and murdered, police widened the scope of investigations. As per early investigations and medical examination reports, no narcotic substances were found, an officer said.

Karnataka CM Sunday asserted that Karnataka is safe for tourists. He told reporters in NR Pura of Chikkamagaluru district that Karnataka cops were probing the death of Kerala girl. "Without knowing the details of its outcome, it would be improper and premature to claim Karnataka is unsafe for tourists," he said.

Family of deceased gets higher relief of ₹51.6L

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On Oct 10, 2016, Shahabuddin Khan, who was working as a first division assistant in the revenue department, was proceeding from Bengaluru to Ooty on the Nanjangud-Gundlupet highway, with his family. A Kerala-registered car dashed against their vehicle. Khan died of serious injuries

Bengaluru: Placing reliance on spot sketch, the high court has not only negated the argument of contributory negligence put forth by the insurer of a Kerala-registered car, but also awarded a modified higher compensation of Rs 51.6 lakh to the family of the deceased govt employee who was killed in a road accident about 10 years ago.

Shahabuddin Khan was working as a first division assistant in the revenue department. On Oct 10, 2016, he was proceeding from Bengaluru to Ooty on the Nanjangud-Gundlupet highway. A Kerala-registered car coming from Gundlupet towards Nanjangud dashed against their vehicle. Khan died of serious injuries. His 16-year-old daughter and 18-year-old son got injured. The wife and the children of the deceased filed separate claim petitions.

On June 23, 2023, the tribunal awarded Rs 41.5 lakh compensation to Khan's wife, Rs 4.7 lakh compensation to the son and Rs 3.5 lakh compensation to the daughter. The liability to pay the compensation was entirely saddled upon National Insurance Company Ltd, the insurer of the car.

The insurer argued that contributory negligence on the part of the car in which deceased Shahabuddin was travelling was completely overlooked by the tribunal.

On the other hand, the claimants argued that spot sketch indicates that Kerala-registered car had steered right and dashed against their car.

The court was told that deceased Shahabuddin was earning Rs 2 lakh per annum military pension as he was an ex-serviceman and the same was not considered.

A division bench comprising Justices SG Pandit and KV Aravind noted that at the spot of accident, the offending Kerala-registered car had 25 feet on its left, whereas the car in which the deceased and injured were travelling had only 15 feet on its left. Thus, it would be clear that the driver of the offending car was totally negligent and his negligence resulted in the accident, the bench d said. It pointed out that the military pension of the deceased was required to be considered, which the tribunal failed to do. Based on the said aspect, the bench awarded a higher compensation of Rs 51.6 lakh in the main claim petition. The daughter was awarded an enhanced compensation of Rs 3.9 lakh. There was no change effected in the compensation awarded to the son.

WHAT IF GROWTH IS HAPPENING ELSEWHERE?
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CHANGE Begins Here

Headache that disappears on lying down? Don't brush it off, say docs

Jahnavi@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: For nearly 10 years, a man in his late 30s from Chennai lived with relentless headaches, repeatedly misdiagnosed as migraines. The pain had a peculiar pattern — it disappeared when he lay down and worsened when he stood up — a classic red flag that went unnoticed for over a decade.

It was only after he was hospitalised that doctors finally ordered detailed imaging. An MRI and dynamic myelogram revealed the real cause: a cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) leak. By then, the condition had become chronic, requiring surgery. Following treatment, his long-standing pain finally disappeared. Doctors say his story is far from unique. Such misdiagnoses are common among patients with CSF leaks, a rare but debilitating condition often mistaken for migraines or sinusitis.

Dr Sharath Kumar GG, consultant in radiology and interventional neuroradiology at Manipal Hospital, Kanakapura Road, who treated the patient, explained: "The brain and spinal cord float in a fluid called cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), which provides support and buoyancy — similar to how a ball floats in water. This fluid is contained within a tough, protective covering called the dura. In some cases, the dura develops a hole, causing CSF to leak out. When the loss of fluid exceeds the body's ability to produce it, the brain loses its cushioning and begins to sink."

Though considered rare — affecting 5 to 10 people per lakh population — experts say the condition is significantly underdiagnosed. "In a city like Bengaluru, we may see around 500 cases a year, but most go undiagnosed because of a lack of awareness," Dr Kumar added.

One of the biggest challenges is that the symptoms closely resemble more common conditions. Dr Rakshith Srinivasa, consultant in neurosurgery at Ramaiah Memorial Hospital, said, "Clinically, the presentation can be confusing. Many of these patients are treated for migraine for a long time. Patients may already have a pre-existing migraine. On top of that, they develop this condition. When the headache worsens, it can trigger a migraine, making it more difficult to differentiate and diagnose," said .

He stressed the importance of recognising a key symptom pattern: "A high level of suspicion is very important for diagnosis. If a patient presents with a headache that worsens on standing and improves on lying down, we should suspect spontaneous intracranial hypotension."

"To diagnose this condition, we need to ask specific questions about when the headache worsens or improves, as patients often only describe its positional nature when prompted. A history of postural headache is followed by an MRI scan, which typically shows characteristic findings such as brain sagging due to fluid loss. However, many cases are missed because imaging is incomplete or not done at the right time — often only the brain is scanned, even though the leak is usually in the spine," Dr Kumar explained.

WHAT ARE CAUSES OF CSF LEAKS

Doctors say CSF leaks can occur because of medical procedures, trauma, or even spontaneously. Dr SR Patil, consultant brain and spine surgeon at Hosmat Hospitals, said: "The most common causes include iatrogenic factors, such as those occurring after spinal anaesthesia or spinal surgery, or traumatic causes following major spinal injury. They can also occur spontaneously, particularly in individuals with connective tissue disorders or congenital neural tube defects, with the most common age of presentation being between 30 and 50."

With symptoms often overlooked, experts caution patients not to ignore persistent warning signs—recurrent, treatment-resistant headaches, fever, neck pain, altered sensorium, watery discharge from spinal wound

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TIMES NATION

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2026

FADNAVIS: THERE'S A GROWING MOVEMENT IN CONG TO REMOVE RAHUL FROM LEADERSHIP ROLE

SUNETRA LAUNCHES BARAMATI BYPOLL CAMPAIGN, SAYS 'DON'T JUDGE MY WORK BY MY GENDER'

HACK OF THE DAY — **OPEN LONG ARTICLES IN READING MODE**

WHAT IT SOLVES: Helps you focus on the actual text by stripping away clutter like sidebars, moving elements, and distracting images or videos

WHAT TO DO: Use Chrome's Reading mode when an article feels visually noisy or when you want a cleaner reading experience

STEPS:

1. **Open** the article in Chrome on your computer
2. **Right-click** the page if it contains text you want to read
3. **Select** "Open in reading mode."
4. **Adjust** font, spacing, color, or read-aloud options if useful
5. **Read** the clean version instead of the full cluttered webpage

NOTE: This is not available on every page. It works best on text-heavy articles, essays, explainers, and documentation pages

SCAN FOR MORE

Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules

Newlyweds among 9 killed in MP road crashes

Bhopal/Jabalpur: A newly-wed couple were among nine people killed in two separate road accidents in Madhya Pradesh over the past 24 hours. In Shivpuri, four people, including the couple, were killed when a trolley carrying poultry feed overturned onto a stationary auto-rickshaw. In the second accident, five people were killed after a tanker ran them over. TNN

STATISTICS A slice of life in numbers

Half of married, educated women have sought work for over 3 years

Among urban, graduate women aged 25–34 who are currently married and looking for work,

50.2% are searching for over 3 years

How other groups compare

Rural married graduate women	38.8%
Urban never-married graduate women	29.6%

Graduate job seekers aged 25-34 — Source: PLFS 2024

With 10.9% net voter deletions, Bengal 5th among 12 states, UTs

SIR Phase 2: State Saw Lowest Number Of Electors Being Added

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New Delhi: West Bengal, which has seen the most noise against SIR, ranked fifth in terms of net deletions (10.9%) among the 12 states/UTs where SIR Phase 2 stands completed, and third in terms of the absolute number of deletions of absent, shifted, dead and doubly enrolled (ASDD) electors.

The state was second only to Uttar Pradesh in the count of dead electors dropped from the roll. While 25.5 lakh deceased electors were detected and removed in UP, West Bengal had 24.2 lakh such voters. Together, UP and West Bengal accounted for almost three-fourths of the 66.9 lakh dead electors deleted across the 12 states/UTs.

In terms of permanently shifted electors struck off the rolls in Phase 2, West Bengal, with 19.9 lakh of the total 3.1 crore deletions in this category, figured at number six. This, notwithstanding the fact that the strength of Bengal's electorate at the start of SIR was second only to UP's.

UP, where outmigration is a common phenomenon, accounted for the highest number of deletions of shifted electors (1.3 crore), followed by Tamil Nadu (52.7 lakh), Gujarat (40.2 lakh), Rajasthan (24.9 lakh) and Madhya Pradesh (22.8 lakh).

Electors removed across the 12 states/UTs for being enrolled at multiple places totalled nearly 1.3 crore. In this category, West Bengal was at number 8, the lowest among the big states. With the removal of 1.4 lakh doubly enrolled electors, it finished behind UP (79.5 lakh), Tamil Nadu (13.5 lakh), Gujarat (9.7 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (8.4 lakh), Kerala (6.4 lakh), Rajasthan (4.6 lakh) and Chhattisgarh (3.7 lakh).

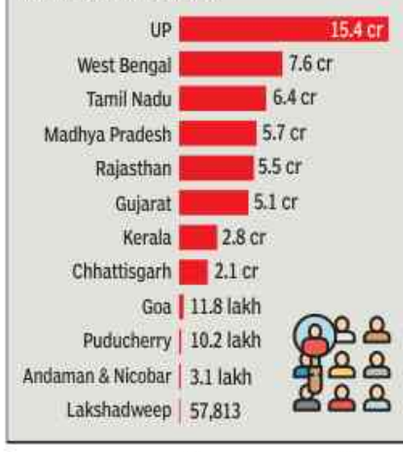
Apart from ASDD electors struck off the rolls, there is an "others" category covering those who chose not to fill and submit enumeration forms despite multiple visits by booth level officers. Of the 12.7 lakh deletions under this head, West Bengal accounted for the fourth-highest number (57,604), behind UP (7.7 lakh), Gujarat (1.9 lakh) and Kerala (1.6 lakh).

West Bengal saw the lowest number of electors being added among the major states during SIR.

These additional enrolments were made based on Form 6 (first-time electors) and Form 8 (existing voters enrolling at a new address).

West Bengal saw an addition of 7.5 lakh electors, putting it in seventh place after UP (92.4 lakh), Tamil Nadu (35 lakh), Kerala (20.4 lakh), Rajasthan (15.4 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (12.9 lakh) and Gujarat (12.2 lakh).

UP LOSES 2.5X BENGAL'S VOTERS



Total active electors as in

	April 10, 2025	Net deletions	Net deletions as % of pre-SIR electorate
UP	13.4 cr	2.04 cr	13.2
West Bengal	6.8 cr	83.9 lakh	10.9
Tamil Nadu	5.7 cr	67.7 lakh	10.6
Madhya Pradesh	5.4 cr	32.9 lakh	5.7
Rajasthan	5.2 cr	29.5 lakh	5.4
Gujarat	4.4 cr	66.8 lakh	13.1
Kerala	2.7 cr	7.1 lakh	2.5
Chhattisgarh	1.9 cr	23.9 lakh	11.3
Lakshadweep	57,632	181	0.3
Andaman & Nicobar	2.6 lakh	51,481	16.6
Goa	10.6 lakh	1.2 lakh	10.2
Puducherry	9.5 lakh	71,267	7
TOTAL	45.8 cr	5.2 cr	10.2

SIR strikes 'gutli man of India' off voter roll

Kolkata: Jasmit Singh Arora, known as "gutli Man of India" for his nationwide mission to collect discarded mango seeds and turn them into trees, will not be able to vote in the Bengal polls since his name has been deleted from the electoral roll, reports **Dipawali Mitra**.

The 54-year-old entrepreneur-turned-environmentalist has been living in Kolkata for 46 years now and had his name on the 2002 voter list. His wife and daughter, who mapped themselves to Jasmit, are on the voter roll.

"This entire exercise has turned into a joke. There is no algorithm, pattern or reason for deletion. I was not called for any hearing but suddenly discovered that my name had been deleted when the final roll was published. My wife's name has 'wife of Jasmit Singh Arora' written there," Jasmit said. "Upon inquiring, I was told to file a fresh application."

Jasmit said he collected mango seeds from across the country. "Even people from Sweden, Australia and New Zealand send seeds. Schools, Army personnel and BSF have joined in. I make saplings and then graft them... Through my 'Tree ka langar' initiative, I distribute them to farmers," he said. "I am well known for my social work. Despite that, my name got struck off. I do not know whether to laugh or cry."

'Many will be arrested before polls': Mamata warns TMC workers

Dwaipayan Ghosh & Mohammad Asif | TNN

Kolkata/Khandaghosh (East Burdwan): Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee warned of "operations" starting Sunday night to arrest Trinamool workers ahead of assembly polls less than a fortnight away, urging them to be careful under an administration now under the EC.

BATTLEGROUND WEST BENGAL

Mamata vowed to resist BJP's attempt "to break Bengal through delimitation" that is slated to start following the Census this year. BJP, she said, is trying to "harass and intimidate" Bengal's voters, including her, because it "knows it will lose the elections".

"Many will be detained and arrested before the polls (as part of an election strategy). These operations will start (Sunday) tonight. Do not be intimidated... Remember, everything is under EC during this election — nothing is in our hands. Be vigilant for another 15-21 days; then we will see, we will fight, and we will win again... They (BJP) know they will lose the election. That is why they have changed everything here," the CM said at a rally in East Burdwan's Khandaghosh, alluding to a wave of transfers in the state administration. She also flagged her opposition to delimitation bill.

Chandra Bose joins TMC, attacks BJP

Subhas Chandra Bose's grandnephew **Chandra Bose** joined Trinamool Congress at a press meet Sunday in the presence of West Bengal education minister Bratya Basu and party MP Kirti Azad.

He said: "BJP's policies are blatantly communal and anti-Constitution." TNN

Kabir admits '₹1,000cr BJP deal' video is real, Trinamool questions PM

Tamaghna.Banerjee @timesofindia.com

Kolkata: Suspended Trinamool MLA **Humayun Kabir** has acknowledged that a video released by the party — purportedly showing him seeking Rs 1,000 crore from BJP and calling Muslims "gullible" — is authentic, but alleged it was selectively edited from a 51-minute recording. The admission has handed Trinamool fresh ammunition against BJP ahead of the April 23 and 29 Bengal polls after PM Narendra Modi's comment on TMC circulating AI-generated clips.

"The video is true, but only 19 minutes of a 51-minute conversation has been shown. I was speaking to two persons — one claimed to be a Sadhu from Siliguri, the other a journalist from Delhi. I have the full video and documents to support my claims," Kabir said.

He alleged that Trinamool national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee had orchestrated a sting operation, sending a man "disguised as a maharaj" and a Delhi-based journalist to entrap him. The 19-minute clip, titled 'The Reality of HK', has not been independently verified. "I will identify them and take legal action. I have six lawyers ready," he said. Trinamool was quick to use the admission to target BJP. "When Kabir himself has said the video is real, why did the Prime Minister call it AI-generated?" a senior party functionary asked.

Poll rolls: Tribunals start hearings today

Kolkata: The 19 appellate tribunals are set to begin hearing appeals for the inclusion or exclusion of electors at Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee National Institute of Water and Sanitation in Kolkata from Monday, four days after the electoral roll for the second-phase Bengal assembly polls was frozen on Thursday night. The tribunals have so far disposed of only four appeals. TNN

Illegal immigration must stop now, else it will be too late, says Modi

▶ Continued from P 1

PM **Narendra Modi** blamed infiltration by illegal immigrants on Trinamool's watch for north Bengal's changing demography.

"The social balance is getting disrupted. Language and culture are changing, while jobs are being usurped. If this isn't stopped now, it will be too late," he said.

Modi accused CM Mamata Banerjee's party of harbouring what he termed an "anti-north Bengal" bias, saying it was reflected in the state govt organising a Durga Puja carnival on Kolkata's Red Road at a time when swathes of north Bengal were experiencing devastating floods. "When several districts in north Bengal faced a crisis after heavy showers and people were crying for help, TMC's 'nirmam' (cruel) govt was celebrating in Kolkata," he said.

Modi alleged that north Bengal's backwardness was TMC's doing. "Over the years, people suffered the ravages of negligence. Central funds were usurped by TMC members. While north Bengal received insufficient funds, the state govt gave Rs 6,000 crore to madrasas."

He contrasted this with BJP's plans for north Bengal, which include the proposed Sevok-Rangpo rail link to connect Siliguri with Sikkim.

He mentioned the Vande Bharat Express from Malda and redevelopment of major stations such as New Jalpaiguri, Siliguri and Kamakhyaguri as proof of his party's commitment to the region.

BJP's manifesto includes an AIIMS and a cancer hospital in north Bengal. IIT and IIM campuses, a sports university and a highway linking the Sunderbans with the hills of Darjeeling are among the other assurances.

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NOTICE

Maharashtra Industrial Township Limited (MITL) is a SPV formed by Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) & National Industrial Corridor Development Implementation Trust (NICDIT). MITL is developing a **'Smart Industrial Township'** at Shendra – Bidkin Industrial Area branded as AURIC near Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar as one of the nodes of DMIC.

MITL invites online applications for e-bidding at Bidkin for 16 plots - 4 Industrial MSME, 3 Industrial Food Park, 4 commercial, 3 residential and 2 plots for Public and Semi-public Amenities—one for a Fuel Station & Workshop and another for an Education-Higher Secondary School.

MITL also invites online applications for e-bidding at Shendra for 11 plots - 3 Commercial plots, 7 Residential plots, and 1 plot for Community Shopping and Public Semi-Public Amenities. Online application have been opened and last date for submission of application is on **22 April, 2026** till **17.00 hours.** Interested investors may log on to **www.auric.city** for further details.

For Maharashtra Industrial Township Limited
Sd/-
Managing Director

25001/14/2627

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
CENTRAL RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BHUBANESWAR
Phone - 0674-2540742 Email - se_ccrw@yahoo.co.in

No. 1428 /Date: 19-03-2026

"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works
T.C.N No. Tender- Online-C.C-02 of 2026

1. Name of the Work : Road works under MMSY-Transferred Road Improvement Programme (MMSY-TRIP)
2. Total No. of Packages : 23 Nos. of Road Works under MMSY-Transferred Road Improvement Programme (MMSY-TRIP) for the year 2025-26
3. Estimated Cost of the Package : Varies from Rs.270.86 lakhs to Rs.997.03 lakhs
4. Class of Contractor
   a) Estimated cost more than Rs. 20.00 lakhs up to Rs. 3.00 Crores : B Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities
   b) Estimated cost more than Rs. 1.00 Crore up to Rs. 20.00 Crores : A Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities
   c) Estimated cost more than Rs. 6.00 Crores up to Rs. 50.00 Crores : Special Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities
   d) Estimated cost more than Rs. 20.00 Crores : Super Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities
5. Period of completion : As mentioned in Column-7 of Annexure
6. Offered rates by bidder : The offered rate by the contractor shall be excluding GST.
7. Other details
   i) Officer inviting tender : Chief Construction Engineer, Central Rural Works Circle, Bhubaneswar
   ii) Availability of Tender : Dt.18.04.2026 from 11.00 hours to Dt.07.05.2026 up to 5.00 PM
   iii) Date of opening of Technical Bid : Dt.08.05.2026 at 11.00 AM
   iv) Date of opening of Financial Bid : To be intimated later on

Further details can be seen from the website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**

OIPR-25001/25082/1/26-27/0001

Sd/- **Chief Construction Engineer**
Central Rural Works Circle, Bhubaneswar

Maharashtra State Cashew Council (MSCC)
C/o, MSAMB, R-7, Market Yard, Gultekadi, Pune - 411037, Ph: 020-24528100 / 24528200,
Web : www.msamb.com, email: cashewcouncil@msamb.com

Inviting applications for the post of General Manager

MSCC require General Manager on contractual basis to work at entire Kokan region and Kolhapur District. Further details relating to application procedure, eligibility criteria, interview dates, etc., may be obtained from the website Web : www.msamb.com, email: cashewcouncil@msamb.com

Chief Executive Officer

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of India Undertaking)
E-Tender Notice

On behalf of Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., Regional Electrical Engineer, KRCL, Ratnagiri, is inviting E-Open Tenders for the following work. **Name of the work** - Annual Maintenance contract for lighting arrangement provided in Tunnels, Substations, on Platforms, approach roads and Circulating areas for Two years in section between Roha (Excluding) to Madure (including) stations in Ratnagiri Region of Konkan Railway. **Tender No. KR/RN/EL/T/3/2026 DATED 13.04.2026**, **Estimated cost** - ₹ 1,60,89,088/- (Excluding GST), **Cost of Tender form** - NIL, **EMD** - ₹ 3,21,800/- (or as shown on IREPS portal). **Last date and time of depositing of tender ON LINE :** 04/05/2026 upto 15:00 hrs. For further details, contact office of Sr. Regional Electrical engineer, MIDC area, Mirjole, Ratnagiri or on Railway web site (www.ireps.gov.in).

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through kpp portal Mode Only)

KPTCL invites Bids for the following works:

No.SEE/Tr(Op)/S-Circle/EE(O)/AEE-2/F-310(01)/26-27/104-05 Date: 10.04.2026

1) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/SEE/TR(Op)/S-Circle/EE(O)/AEE-2/25-26/EPR-15/Call-6, Dt:23.09.2025 for the work of **"Providing new 11kV C&R Panel & Integration of C&R at 66/11kV National College Substations pertaining to Operation Division HSR Layout in the jurisdiction of Transmission(Operation) South Circle, Bengaluru on total turnkey percentage tender basis"**.

No.SEE/Tr(Op)/S-Circle/EE(O)/AEE-2/26-27/EPR-14/106-08 Date: 10.04.2026

2) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/SEE/Tr(M)/S-Circle/EE(O)/AEE-2/25-26/EPR-14/Call-6 Dated:09.09.2025 for **"The work of Upgradation of protection system at 220kV station, BWSSB, Tataguni, Kanakapura Road, Bengaluru on Turnkey Basis on Percentage Basis"** pertains to Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Bengaluru".

The bids will be received through kpp portal mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject tenders can be got by logging on to **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **13.04.2026.**

Sd/-, Superintending Engineer (Elecl.),
Transmission (Operation), Circle-South, Ground Floor, KPTCL Office Complex, KPTCL, A.R. Circle, Bengaluru-560 009.

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Kishore Kumar S, S/o Srinivasan S, R/o No. 1051, 3rd Cross, 4th Main, near Veeranjaneya Temple, Rajagopalanagara, Peenya 2nd Stage, Bangalore North – 560058, do hereby declare that my father's correct name is Srinivasan S and not Srinivasan. Henceforth, Srinivasan S shall be used for all purposes. Affidavit No. IN-KA30496783863570Y, sworn before Notary at Bangalore on 09-04-2026.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, KULDEEP SINGH, S/o. Ved Singh, Residing at No.123/1, Gali No.2, Village Nanglan, Post Khamano, Dist Fatehgarh Sahib, Pin-141801 have changed my name from KULDEEP SINGH to KULDEEP SINGH KAUSHAL vide Affidavit Dt: 10/04/2026, sworn before Notary Sivakumara M N, Bangalore

I, Rajeshwari Subramanian will be known as Rajeswari Subramanian vide affidavit KA31456345210711Y as per govt IDs all purpose

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Himanshi W/o Karan Chauhan R/o D-1603, Shriram Greenfield, Budigere Cross Road, Bommenahalli, Mandur Post, Bengaluru - 560049, have changed my name to Himanshi Jindal for all future purposes.

I, POONAM spouse of Kuldeep Singh Kaushal, Residing at No.123/1, Gali No.2, Village Nanglan, Post Khamano, Dist Fatehgarh Sahib, Pin-141801 have changed my name from POONAM to POONAM KAUSHAL vide Affidavit Dt: 10/04/2026, sworn before Notary Sivakumara M N, Bangalore

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GET NOTICED

MBA aspirants chase rankings, but there is more to it

A higher GMAT could be assumed to open doors to top education, placements, and to achieve status on investment. However, a closer look at the data reveals alternative realities

ICMAI June TEE 2026 registration deadline extended

As GenAI grows, institutions must not just adopt, but also critically assess it

AI cannot replace teachers, rather it elevates their role

Certifications are gaining ground over university degrees

Nashik IT firm suspends 6 men arrested in sex harassment case

Abhilash.Botekar@timesofindia.com

Nashik: Nashik cops have stepped up searches for an eighth suspect, a woman, named in nine sexual harassment complaints filed by employees of an IT company. Six male staffers and one woman, AGM (HR) of the company, have been arrested so far based on the complaints filed in Nashik and Mumbai. The company has suspended the six arrested men.

HUNT ON FOR 8TH ACCUSED

According to police, the eighth woman, accused of sexual exploitation and hurting religious sentiments of the complainants, is being tracked based on clues.

"We have formed two teams to track her. The woman is currently evading arrest but we are close," said a police officer. The company issued a release reiterating its "long-standing zero-tolerance policy towards harassment and coercion of any form".

"We have always ensured the highest standards of safety and wellbeing of our employees at the workplace. As soon as we were made aware of the matter in Nashik, we took swift action. The employees being investigated have been suspended pending inquiry. We are cooperating with law enforcement authorities, and any further action will be based on the conclusion of this investigation," the release states.

The company offered no response to unconfirmed reports that it was closing its Nashik office and relocating employees to other branches. The cops denied any knowledge of the plans. "Our role is limited to investigations and trials and there is no reason for sealing or closing the company from our side. We are not aware of the company's plans," an officer said.

(With inputs from Shashank Didmishe)

Mathura boat tragedy: 2 more bodies recovered, toll rises to 13

Agra: Two more bodies have been recovered from the Yamuna in Vrindavan on Sunday, taking the toll to 13 in Friday's accident in which a motorboat carrying devotees capsized. Police said search operations are on for three missing devotees. An initial probe has found that the boatman carried more passengers than the permitted capacity and did not provide safety kits.

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Contact Number: 9944971623, 8129988725
Website: ppdcagra.dc.msme.gov.in
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Phone No.-05946-286000, Website: www.uou.ac.in, e-mail: career@uou.ac.in
Advertisement No. UOU/ Add/R3/002/2026 Date: 12 April, 2026
Faculty Recruitment
Online applications are invited in the prescribed Application Form, from eligible candidates for recruitment of Professor and Assistant Professor in various Schools/Subjects of the University. Online Application form link will be open/start from 13.04.2026 at University website. The last date of submission of online application form is 12.05.2026 (05:00 pm) and last date for receiving of hard copy of application at University is 25.05.2026 (05:00 pm). For more details regarding vacancies, qualifications, experience, fee, etc. Please visit the University website www.uou.ac.in.
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CHANGE Begins Here
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Chief Minister, Uttarakhand
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NDC to crack down on substandard dental colleges with digital audits, biometrics

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LEGEND UP CLOSE: QUEEN B IN HER MANY MOODS

THE CHANTEUSE AND THE SEDUCTRESS: The duo whose talents made Muzaffar Ali's Umrao Jaan a landmark film

YEH KYA JAGAH HAI DOSTON: With Khayyam who scored the Umrao Jaan songs, regarded among her finest work

GOING WEST: With British popstar Boy George (centre) and R D Burman in Bombay, an encounter that led to an artistic collaboration

SITARON SE AAGE: Keeping time with the great instrumentalist of his age, the peerless Ravi Shankar

MUTUAL ADMIRATION: Sharing a light moment with PM Modi along with her sister Meena

FROM ME TO YOU: A R Rahman gets an award from the diva, who sang for his Rangeela compositions

The most prolific recorded artiste ever, songstress from Mangeshkar clan mastered a range of genres and held millions in thrall with her sensual, exuberant voice
'Jaiye aap kahan jayenge...'

ASHA BHOSLE | 1933 - 2026

Asha springs eternal *through the ages*

Bella Jaisinghani | TNN

Exemplary singer Asha Bhosle, whose life quilt was woven by skeins of struggle and triumph, passed away at age 92 Sunday. The evergreen artiste breathed her last at Breach Candy Hospital, a day after being hospitalised for cardiac and respiratory ailments.

An innocuous "chance" given to her by All India Radio at the age of 15 led into a career spanning 11,000 songs, the final flourish being a three-hour concert at age 90.

Her son Anand Bhosle said the final rites will be performed at Shivaji Park crematorium at 4pm Monday April 13 with full state honours. Members of the public can pay respects from 11am to 3pm at her residence Casa Grande in Lower Parel.

Born Sept 8, 1933 in Sangli to noted Natyasangeet exponent Pt Deenanath Mangeshkar and Shevantibai, Ashaji defied the adage that nothing grows beneath the shade of a vast banyan tree. She blossomed into a robust musical persona despite the abundant talent and fame of her older sister, legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar. "It is the sapling's will to grow that helps it sprout," she said.

Their rivalry became a frequent topic of conversation down the years. Siblings Meena, Usha and Hridaynath Mangeshkar were also stalwart artistes who bonded firmly as India's first family of playback singing.

Financial compulsions initially forced Ashaji to accept songs that Lataji declined – cabaret numbers, and songs picturised on the lead heroine's sister or friend, dancer and vamp. But that turned out to be a blessing in disguise as Ashaji's full plumage of vocals unfurled before the nation. Her partnership with Helen is history.

In her heyday she recorded seven or eight songs, flitting between studios, languages and genres. Old visuals of her recording in a pastel cotton sari with a flower in her hair slowly graduated to beautiful silken saris with similar coloured faux blossoms as the years wore on.

Diverse composers like Madan Mohan, O P Nayyar, Kalyanji Anandji, Laxmikant Pyarelal, R D Burman and Khayyam, and Marathi music directors Shridhar Phadke and Hridaynath Mangeshkar partnered her journey. Between her early hits like 'Aaiye meherbaan' to 'Tora mann darpan kehlaye' and 'Sapna mera toot gaya' to the memorable Umrao Jaan ghazals, everything in between was as consequential.

The in-house Mangeshkar pool of talent also created a fragrant bouquet of melodies. Ashaji laughingly recalled how she felt shy to sing 'Tarun aahe raatra ajoon', a beautifully erotic Marathi bhavgeet composed by her brother Hridaynath 'Bal' Mangeshkar. Son Hemant Bhosle tuned the whisper-like 'Jaage jaage nainon mein' for her in Damaad.

However the stairway to heaven was paved with gold and rocks both. Ashaji was candid about the numerous setbacks she suffered in her personal life including domestic abuse by her first husband Ganpatrao Bhosle, whom she eloped with and married as an impressionable teenager. Her liaison with composer O P Nayyar ended in bitterness while her second marriage to R D Burman was no bed of roses either.

"Irrespective of all the ups and downs I was facing in my personal life, the moment I stood before the microphone, I shut that out of my mind and concentrated solely on the song I had to deliver. There were days my children were sick but I had to come to the studio and sing a peppy or romantic number. God gave me troubles but he also gave me the strength to overcome them. I have worked hard. Very hard," she said in an interview to Doordarshan.

NOTES HIGH & LOW

A STAR IS BORN

- Born **Sept 8, 1933, in Sangli, Asha Bhosle was the third daughter of Pt Deenanath Mangeshkar.** She was about four years younger than her legendary sister Lata Mangeshkar
- Dinanath's premature death at the age of 41 left **the family in dire straits.** Asha was barely nine then

THE EARLY YEARS

With elder sister and rival Lata Mangeshkar

- A dramatic phase in her teenage years began when she **eloped at the age of 14 with a man who was nearly 20 years elder.** Ganpat Bhosle encouraged her to take up singing as a career
- **Her earliest songs in Hindi films were as part of the chorus.** They included 'Saawan aaya' (Chunariya) in 1948. Her **first solo Hindi film song** was for Raat Ki Rani (1949)
- Her **milestone collaboration with composer OP Nayyar** sparked with the BR Chopra film, 'Naya Daur' (1957). Her last song with him was 'Chain se humko kabhi aapne jeene na diya' ('Pran Jaye Par Vachan Na Jaye', 1974). This **song won her a Filmfare Award** though it was never picturised in the film

THE BURMAN-GULZAR COMBO

Her professional and romantic partner R D Burman

- Her **partnership with music director RD Burman**, whom she later married, blossomed as they worked on 'Teesri Manzil' (1966). Asha had recalled how she was once **rehearsing the convulsive tune of 'Aa aa aaja! ' seated in the back of her car** when the alarmed driver heard her wheezing and turned to ask if she was feeling ill!
- Her collaboration with RD Burman and Gulzar resulted in a breeze of film and non-film classics like **Khushboo (Ghar jayegi), Ijaazat (Mera kuchh saaman), Namkeen (Phir se aaiyo badra bidesi), Khoobsurat (Saare niyam tod do)**

AWARDS

- Asha Bhosle won a record **seven Filmfare awards for best female playback singer** including for 'Dum maro dum' (Hare Rama Hare Krishna) and 'Yeh mera dil' (Don). She won her **first National Award for 'Dil cheez kya hai'** in Khayyam's piece de resistance 'Umrao Jaan' (1981). Her second National Award came for 'Mera kuchh saamaan' (Ijaazat, 1986)
- In 1997, she became the **first Indian singer to be nominated for a Grammy.** She had two Grammy nominations. She was bestowed the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2001. She was **awarded the Padma Vibhushan**, the country's second highest civilian honour, in 2008

INTERNATIONAL FAME

In an MTV video with the British boy band 'Code Red', singing a ballad in her silk saree

Her **collaborations with international artists** including Boy George, REM's Michael Stipe, the Kronos Quartet, Nelly Furtado and Code Red began in the 1980s with a group called the West India Company. **In 1997, a British band Cornershop paid tribute to her with 'Brimful of Asha'.** A 2005 hit number by Black-Eyed Peas 'Don't Phunk With My Heart' was derived from two of Asha's songs

A GREAT COOK

Asha Bhosle was an **excellent cook.** Friends and colleagues looked forward to her invitations, particularly when non-veg items were on the menu. In 2002, this passion gave rise to her **Asha's chain of restaurants** across locations in five countries including UAE (Dubai, Abu Dhabi), Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and UK (Birmingham and Manchester). Menu includes her personal favourites, especially Mumbai's street food

CHURA LIYA HAI TUMNE JO DIL KO

- In 2011, the Guinness World Records recognised Asha Bhosle as the most recorded artist in music history, with **11,000 songs** including solos, duets and chorus numbers in multiple languages to her credit
- Age did not prevent her from experimenting with different facets of her talent. Her work spanned film music, pop, ghazals, bhajans, folk songs, qawwalis
- In 2002, Asha composed the music for an **original album** 'Aap Ki Asha'. In 2013, at the age of 79, she stepped before the camera as an actress with the Marathi film 'Mai' co-starring her niece Padmini Kolhapure

First song (1943)	Last song (2026)
Chala chala nav bala (Marathi film Majha Bal)	The Shadowy Light For British virtual band Gorillaz

A never-ageing diva, and her lessons in crisp delivery

Shruti Jauhari

Mein chaman mein chahe jahan rahoon, mera haq hai fasal-e-bahaar par'... (singer: Asha Bhosle, music: Jaidev, lyrics: Jigar Moradabadi - 1971)

Yes Asha tai, you will always be Mallika (Queen) of the sur-e-gulzaar - garden of notes.

Asha lost her father, one of the most celebrated Natya Sangeet artists, Pt Deenanath Mangeshkar, when she was just nine. But 'Baba' continued to live through her clean and crisp, intricate yet perfectly measured musical phrase deliveries.

For decades she was unstoppable, belting out gems like: 'O panchchi pyare' (Bandini: 1963), 'Jhumka gira re' (Mera Saya: 1966), 'Aaja aaja mein hun pyar tera' (Teesri Manzil: 1966), 'Dam maro dam' (Hare Rama Hare Krishna: 1971), 'Chain se hamko kabhi' (Pran Jaye par Vachan na Jaye: 1973), 'Chura liya hai tumne jo dil ko' (Yaadon ki Baarat: 1973), 'Mujhe rang de' (Thakshak: 1999).

Back in the days when the singers along with a 40-piece orchestra recorded a song on just two tracks and the entire piece was done in one take, she delivered 'Dekho bijali bole bin baadal ke' (Phir Wahi Dil Laya Hun: 1963), the Punjabi number 'Do guttan ker mariyan' (Posti: 1951), Bappi-da's 'Chirodini tumi je aamar' (Amar Sangi: 1987); and the exquisite Jaidev's ghazal 'Caravan guzra kiya ham rehguzar dekha kiye' (1970).

The challenges of perfect diction demand not just vocal intricacy but immense mental discipline. All this from a single mother, equally devoted to her family!

For students of music, impeccable phrases woven throughout her songs remain an education. Listening to the rapid yet crystal-clear cascading phrase, from the antara of 'Paan khaye saiyan hamaro' (Teesri Kasam: 1966), or 'Sakhi ri sun bole' (Miss Mary: 1957) or 'Khat likh de sanwariya ke naam babu' (Aaye Din Bahaar Ke: 1966), seems as if a string of fireworks is exploding. The seamless vocal contours (meends) of 'Abhi na jao chchod ke' (Hum Dono: 1961), 'hamne to dil ko aapke kadmo pe rakh diya' (Mere Sanam: 1965), 'Jivalaga rahile re door ghar maze' (A Musical Journey - EP Asha Bhosle: 1981), proves her virtuosity over all aspects of voice modulation.

ASHA ON STYLE

"If you have the desire *aur riyaz ka gala ho to*, it's very easy. If you have training in classical music which has 3,000 ragas and raaginis and so many more combinations you can sing anything

Ashaji's versatility made her voice a true reflection of Madhubala's iconic beauty in the song 'Aaiye meherban' (Howrah Bridge: 1958), Helen's fluid dance moves in 'Piya tu ab to aaja' (Caravan: 1971) and Rekha's enigmatic gaze in the ghazal 'Dil cheez kya hai' (Umrao Jaan: 1981).

While composer O P Nayyar used her to perfection in 'Uden jab jab zulfen teri' (Naya Daur: 1957), 'Poocho na hamein hum unke liye' (Mitti Mein Sona: 1960), 'Jaiye aap kahan jayenge' (Mere Sanam: 1965) and 'Yehi woh jagah hai' (Ye Raat Fir Na Aayegi: 1966), R D Burman once admitted that he wouldn't have made songs like 'Daiyya ye mein kahan aa phasi' (Caravan: 1971), 'Mera naam hai Shabnam' (Kati Patang: 1970), if he did not have Ashaji to render them. There is no asha (hope) of seeing another Asha ever.

(The writer is a music teacher/singer)

FIRST FAMILY: Between them, Mangeshkar siblings Usha, Lata, Hridaynath, Asha and Meena possessed a diverse set of skills in music; Asha with her late daughter Varsha

'The biggest challenge in my life was marrying Bhosle'

From the **TOI** archives, the singer in her own words

You like taking up challenges, don't you?

■ Every day of my life has been a challenge —from singing a song that is not my type to being asked suddenly to sing a classical song with no practice. The biggest challenge was when I decided to marry Bhosle, a man of my choice. Twelve years of my life went into making it work.

What was it like being Lata's sister?

■ It was more of a disadvantage. There would be comparisons. People would often say Lata is better. Some other woman in my place would have given up singing, but I was very stubborn. I fought and made a place for myself. Many say that marrying Bhosle was a big mistake, but I am Asha Bhosle because of him. He pushed me into singing. He kept a tutor for me and made me sing. The reason could have been money, but I am Asha Bhosle because he helped me become one.

Is there any truth to the stories about sibling rivalry between you and Lata?

■ Yes, there is, but it's from my sister's side. She was the queen, and when I got popular it did upset her.

What about the current crop of singers? Who do you like from among them?

■ Real singers were people like Lata Mangeshkar, Mohd Rafisaab, Kishore Kumar, etc. Even today, we have some very good singers like Shankar Mahadevan, Shaan and KK. Then there's Shreya (Ghoshal) and Sunidhi (Chauhan) who sing well, but unfortunately they aren't getting good songs. Nowadays, it's Munni Badnaam Hui.

...when she emerged from the shadow of an elder sister

Avijit Ghosh

Societies clinging to the past while dreaming of the future are often trapped in a duality. India, just out of the clutches of colonialism, too experienced this. The nation's attitude to the female playback voice was complicated. After all, voices are secret catalogues of social history.

Around Independence, several singers such as Zohrabai Ambalewali, Rajkumari, Amirbai Karnataki, Shamshad Begum, Geeta Dutt, jostled for space and ascendancy in Hindi film music. But within a few years, Lata Mangeshkar's voice encapsulating purity and propriety became the gold standard.

Asha Bhosle, almost four years younger, began her career under the shadow of her elder sister Lata. Keen to find her own voice, the Sangli-born singer listened to a farrago of foreign artistes: samba singer Carmen Miranda, the joyous Caterina Valente, even the breathless Elvis Presley. "Slowly," Asha revealed in an interview to composer Salil Chowdhury on DD Bangla in 1993, "I carved out a different style from my sister."

In time, the two became antonyms to each other. Lata's voice had the innocence of a morning hymn, the sanctity of a temple while Asha's evoked the sizzle of cabaret, the rush of a French kiss. "Lata didi and I are like Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru. Gandhi was great; Nehru wasn't bad either," Asha told Outlook magazine in April, 2006.

The sisters were fundamentally apart, even in their choices and their personalities. She thinks with her "head", me with my "heart", Asha once said. Perhaps, circumstances played a role. Lata started singing for films at 13 after their father singer-actor Deenanath Mangeshkar's untimely demise. She never married. Lata disapproved when Asha eloped.

In the 1950s and 60s, Asha wasn't the preferred singer of most A-list music directors, barring OP Nayyar. She was rarely the playback for major heroines. She once credited BR Chopra for giving her the chance to sing for a big movie, Dilip Kumar's 'Naya Daur' (music: OP Nayyar, 1957).

By mid-60s, Asha had carved out her

Siblings, both singers yet poles apart

distinctiveness. Her range expanded. And her voice was richer in tone, more nuanced in texture. Three songs exemplify this. 'Aagey bhi jaane na tu' (Waqt, composer: Ravi, 1965) underlined a felicity for aligning each note with the lyric's emotional intent. In 'Teesri Manzil' (1966), young composer RD Burman rewrote film music grammar, capturing the new musical zeitgeist. In 'Teesri Kasam', set in hinterland Bihar and released the same year, her rendition of 'Pan khaye saiyan hamaaro' was flawless flavouring the film with a folksy authenticity. The three belonged to three different musical worlds.

Music director RD Burman, whom she would marry in 1980, "really exploited the full potential of my voice and challenged me to greater heights," she told journalist Kavita Chhibber in a long 2003 interview. "When he offered me Aaja aaja, I was petrified...but didi said you are a Mangeshkar and you can do it." The remark reveals how Lata was also a mentor despite their differences.

Broadly speaking, RD preferred Lata for his more classical compositions. But the nightclubs with cigarette smoke and the grungy hippy joints were Asha's fiefdom. These settings were home to some of the most furious and distinctive 70s rhythms. 'Mera naam hai Shabnam' (film: Kati Patang, 1970), 'Piya tu ab to aaja' (film: Caravan, 1971), 'Dum maaro dum' (film: Hare Rama Hare Krishna, 1972) and many more.

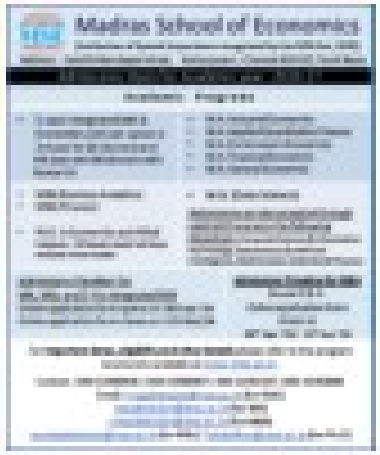
In 1981, 'Umrao Jaan' (music: Khayyam) became to Asha what films like 'Anarkali' and 'Pakeezah' were to Lata. Her voice became an extension of the courtesan's melancholic life. "Through her voice, you reach Umrao Jaan's soul," Khayyam told this reporter in 2008.

Compared to Lata, Asha was more eager to embrace and adapt to shifting music trends. Hers was the sensual voice that the more conservative India sought to consign to the background. But as the country changed and evolved, she found wings. In 1980s, when disco was the celluloid favourite and ghazals the flavor of private albums, she sang 'Disco Station' for Bappi Lahiri (film: Hathkadi, 1982) and outshone Pakistani singer, Ghulam Ali, in Meraj-e-Ghazal (1983). And when Indi-Pop took centre stage in the 1990s, she delivered one of its most memorable tracks, "Jaanam samjha karo (1997)."

Much before the two sisters reached the autumn of their careers, Asha had become the preferred voice for a new generation of singers. She was their lighthouse and lodestar. Whether we like Asha or Lata has more to do with the person we are rather than the songs they sang. We see in their voices our own reflections. For true lovers of music, it is never Lata or Asha; it is always both.

CBSE Advanced Maths, Science stress HOTS; standard papers focus on fundamentals

NMC invalidates teaching experience from unrecognised departments



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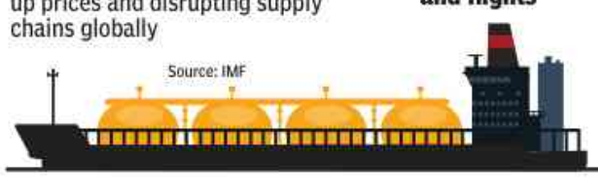
TIMES BUSINESS

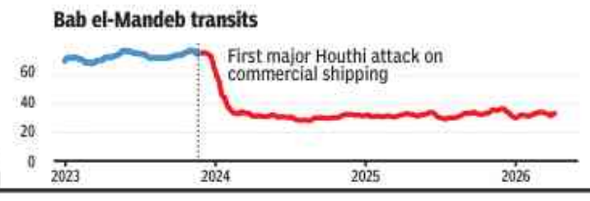
THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2026

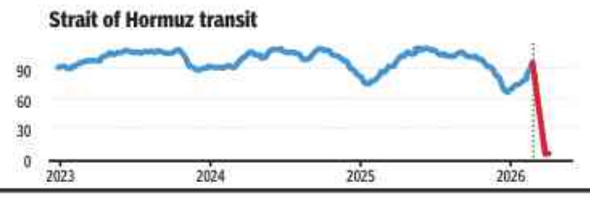
The global economy faces major test

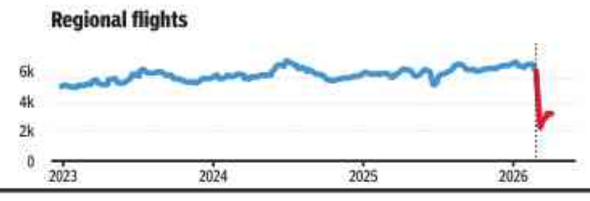
The West Asia war has triggered a large supply shock, cutting oil flows by about 13% and LNG flows by about 20%, pushing up prices and disrupting supply chains globally



Disruptions to ships and flights



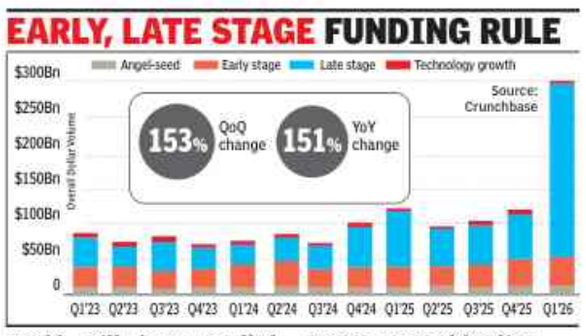




AI boom drives global VC funding to record $300bn

AI Startups Corner 80% Of Funds | Broader Activity Uneven

Supriya.Roy@timesofindia.com



Bengaluru: Global venture funding hit a record $300 billion in the January–March quarter, the highest ever for a single quarter, according to Crunchbase data. The surge, driven largely by artificial intelligence deals, has reignited the debate on whether venture markets are truly recovering or if capital is concentrating in a narrow set of companies.

Nearly 80% of the funding went to AI startups, with four companies—OpenAI, Anthropic, xAI and Waymo—accounting for about $188 billion, or roughly two-thirds of the total. The scale of these deals has lifted overall funding numbers, even as activity across the broader market remains uneven.

Andreessen Horowitz, in a recent blogpost, said the quarter cannot be viewed only through the lens of mega-rounds. Even excluding the four largest deals, funding would still have totalled around $112 billion, a level it said would have been a record in most prior years. The top-tier venture capital firm also pointed to movement in the rest of the market, with early-stage funding up 41% year-on-year and seed funding rising 31% in value, although the number of seed deals declined, indicating fewer but larger bets.

Investors closer home that TOI spoke to said the divergence between global trends and India remains pronounced, particularly across stages of funding.

"Globally, we are seeing a barbell effect in fundraising, with capital concentrated at the very early stage and again at the late stage, where likely winners are attracting a large share of funding. Mid-stage companies continue to face challenges in raising growth rounds, although we expect this to improve in the second half of the year as early-stage companies mature. In India, however, we are yet to see this late-stage concentration of capital," said Sanjay Swamy, founder and managing partner at Prime Venture Partners.

"India is not yet seeing the same late-stage recovery as global markets. Early-stage activity is improving, but mid- to late-stage capital remains constrained, especially with several large global investors who were historically active in India not participating as much in the current AI-led funding cycle," said Rahul Taneja, partner at Lightspeed India.

Data from Tracxn shows that while sentiment in India is improving, the recovery remains gradual. About 74% of investors expect funding conditions to improve in 2026, while capital deployment continues to be selective, with a focus on AI and deeptech sectors. In India, seed-stage startups raised $1.3 billion in FY26, a 15% decline from $1.5 billion in both FY25 and FY24. Early-stage funding surged to $4.8 billion, up 33% from $3.6 billion in FY25 and 37% from $3.5 billion in FY24.

FPIs continue to sell equities in April, pull out over ₹48k crore

New Delhi: Foreign investors maintained their aggressive sell-off in Indian equities, withdrawing Rs 48,213 crore ($5.1 billion) in the first 10 days of April, as rising geopolitical tensions and global macroeconomic uncertainties reduced risk appetite.

The sell-off follows a record outflow of Rs 1.2 lakh crore (about $12.7 billion) in March, the worst monthly exodus on record. The sharp reversal comes after FPIs had infused Rs 22,615 crore in Feb, marking the highest monthly inflow in 17 months.

With the latest withdrawals, total outflows by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have surged to Rs 1.8 lakh crore in 2026 so far. In April alone, foreign investors withdrew equities worth Rs 48,213 crore from cash market till April 10, according to NSDL data. Market participants attributed the sustained selling pressure to a combination of global macroeconomic headwinds and heightened geopolitical risks.

Himanshu Srivastava, principal manager, research, at Morningstar Investment Research India, noted that selling was largely driven by risk aversion triggered by escalating tensions in West Asia, which pushed up crude oil prices and revived concerns about inflation globally.

Echoing similar concerns, V K Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Investments, said the energy crisis, coupled with the potential spillover impact on the Indian economy has kept FPIs firmly in sell mode. AGENCIES

RBI criticises banks' rupee arbitrage trades

A senior Reserve Bank of India official criticised foreign-exchange market makers for their role in aggravating the rupee's weakness during the ongoing West Asia tensions, as the regulator keeps up its tough messaging stance in its defense of the currency.

Addressing an annual foreign exchange dealers' conference in Paris at the weekend, deputy governor T Rabi Sankar said the arbitrage between local and offshore markets strained dollar liquidity at a time when the rupee was under pressure due to large foreign outflows, according to people familiar with the matter. They asked not to be identified as they are not authorised to speak to the media.

The central bank did not respond to an email seeking comment outside of regular business hours. Sankar did not reply to a text message seeking comment.

Sankar's comments came two weeks after RBI clamped down on speculation against the rupee by capping currency bets by banks at $100 million each and barring them from entering derivative contracts in the offshore market. The restrictions forced banks to reverse around $30 billion worth of arbitrage trades under which they had bought dollars in the local market and sold them offshore.

In his speech, Sankar signaled the regulator's displeasure at banks transferring arbitrage trades from their books to corporate clients even though companies are not allowed to undertake such transactions, the people said. The RBI also disapproved of certain other ways in which banks took the trades off their books to reduce their exposure, the people cited Sankar as saying at the conference in Paris. Last week, RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra said arbitrage positions had been building between offshore and local markets towards the end of March. While these linkages were important for efficient price discovery in normal times, excessive volatility could be destabilising, he said. BLOOMBERG

$100MN CEILING

- Sankar's comments came two weeks after **RBI clamped down on speculation against the rupee by capping currency bets by banks at $100 million** each and barring them from entering derivative contracts in the offshore market
- **The restrictions forced banks to reverse around $30 billion worth of arbitrage trades** under which they had bought dollars in the local market and gone on to sell them offshore

War in Gulf, layoffs hit discretionary spends

Asmita.Dey@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Consumers seem to be cutting back on discretionary spends, allocating more budgets to essentials and value purchases as a mix of war-driven uncertainty and layoffs have nudged people to tighten their purse strings and save more.

Even as the US and Iran agreed upon a two-week ceasefire last week, the prospects of a peace deal faded as talks between the two countries held in Pakistan failed to produce desired results. Analysts said that caution will prevail until there's clarity on a de-escalation. "Post mid-March, discretionary offtakes slowed down," said Satyaki Ghosh, CEO at Raymond Lifestyle, pinning hopes on the upcoming wedding season to support

Shift towards essentials seen as companies push smaller packs and affordable options

demand going ahead. "We are running some value-based offerings but no direct discounts as yet," Ghosh said.

Consumers are not just curbing overall spending at stores, but are also gravitating more towards affordable options and value-driven choices, prioritising essentials over indulgences, said Tarun Arora, CEO & whole-time director at Zydus Wellness. People are not necessarily trading down although there is some tightening of spends with simpler routines and fewer impulse additions, said Shankar Prasad, CEO at D2C beauty brand Plum.

"What we are seeing is a gradual shift in consumer preference towards essential categories, with relatively higher spends on everyday, need-based products, while discretionary and indulgent purchases have softened a bit, which is typically the case during periods of uncertainty," said Mayank Shah, chief marketing officer at Parle Products.

TCS makes 25k fresher offers; AI push on track

Firm Hiring Externally For Future-Ready Skills

Veena Mani & Shilpa Phadnis | TNN

Bengaluru: Even as TCS saw its headcount fall by nearly 24,000 in FY26, CHRO Sudeep Kunnumal said the entire decline cannot be attributed to last year's restructuring. He added that the company has already made 25,000 campus offers and remains on track to hire around 40,000 freshers annually. "Last year, we onboarded 44,000 trainees. We have already made 25,000 campus offers in India and will continue to be among the largest recruiters across universities and the market," he told **TOI**.

TCS's headcount declined by 23,460 in FY26 to 5,84,519 employees, though it rose by 2,356 in the March quarter. Kunnumal said hiring will remain aligned with business demand, alongside continued investments in capability building, with learning intensity rising 25% year-on-year. "At the same time, we are hiring externally for niche, future-ready skills in areas such as AI, advisory and consulting," he added.

He said the restructuring exercise has been completed and accounted for a substantially smaller portion of the decline—far below the 2% initially announced. The reduction was also driven by efficiency gains, productivity improvements, and selective role replacements amid voluntary attrition.

Last year, the company announced it would cut around 2% of its workforce—over 12,000 employees—primarily at mid- and senior levels. Its COO Aarthi Subramanian clarified that the restructuring was not driven by AI, but by the need to build a future-ready workforce. Despite fewer additions, TCS's wage bill rose by Rs 10,000 crore in FY26, driven by higher bonuses, variable payouts, salary hikes, and about Rs 2,100 crore in labour code-related provisions.

TCS reported a 2.4% decline in constant-currency revenue in FY26—the first such dip in its listed history—while dollar revenue fell 0.5% to $30 billion. In the March quarter, revenue grew 1.2% sequentially in constant currency but declined 0.6% year-on-year. However, nearly $30 million in incremental revenue came from related party transactions involving Tata Steel, JLR and M&A including CoastalCloud and Listengage.

Subramanian said FY26 marked a turning point for enterprise AI adoption, with annualised AI revenue rising to $2.3 billion from $1.8 billion in the Dec quarter, driven by demand across transformation, engineering and cloud modernisation. "In 2023 and 2024, enterprises were largely experimenting with AI through pilots and proofs of concept. FY26 marks a shift towards scaled deployments. What we are seeing now is the transition from pilots to full-scale projects. This is driving incremental revenue growth quarter after quarter. We classify AI revenues clearly as AI transformation-led and do not include AI embedded within other services like software engineering," she said.

Subramanian added that the company's AI strategy is centred on building a full-stack "infrastructure-to-intelligence" play. Investments such as Hypervault are strengthening its position in the infrastructure layer, alongside partnerships with OpenAI and broader ecosystem collaborations. Last year, TCS secured $1 billion from private equity firm TPG to advance its AI data centre strategy, with OpenAI set to be the first customer of its Hypervault business, starting with 100 MW capacity and scaling to 1 GW over time.

TCS is also reshaping its go-to-market approach in the AI era. "We are conducting AI immersion sessions with CXOs to help them understand how AI can drive transformation. This shift is helping bridge the gap between rapid technology evolution and enterprise adoption."

> Last year, we onboarded 44,000 trainees. We have already made 25,000 campus offers in India and will continue to be among the largest recruiters across universities and the market...At the same time, we are hiring externally for niche, future-ready skills in areas such as AI, advisory and consulting
>
> **Sudeep Kunnumal** | CHRO, TCS

> In 2023 and 2024, enterprises were largely experimenting with AI through pilots and proofs of concept. FY26 marks a shift towards scaled deployments. What we are seeing now is the transition from pilots to full-scale projects. This is driving incremental revenue growth quarter after quarter
>
> **Aarthi Subramanian** | COO, TCS

Toy prices soar as raw material costs rise due to Gulf conflict

Yogesh.Kabirdoss @timesofindia.com

Chennai: Toy prices are rising ahead of the summer holidays as the West Asia conflict pushes up crude-linked raw material costs, making the season more expensive for parents. Prices in some categories have already increased.

Shabbir Gabajiwala, president of The All India Toy Manufacturers Association (TAITMA), said toy prices could rise 10%–40%, depending on plastic content, with products such as building blocks, children's ride-ons, toy guns etc made of plastic. "While some manufacturers have raised prices, others may to follow, as plastic costs have surged 70% from Rs 100 to Rs 170 per kg in the past month," he said. The war has led to increase in the cost of inputs such as acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), polypropylene (PP), & packaging.

Funskool India said the most impacted inputs are plastic resins — ABS and PP, which have risen 40%–60% over last month. CEO K A Shabir said, "The sharp rise in input cost is putting pressure on margins." Gujarat's Aditi Toys' founder Subhashbhai Balubhai Zala said the rise is driven by crude's volatility and supply disruptions."Prices have increased by up to 30% in certain categories at Aditi Toys," he said.

TOI IN THE CLASSROOM

Multi Cap Funds Back In Focus After Recent Correction In Markets

Multicap funds are drawing renewed attention after the recent correction in equity markets, with wealth managers pitching them as a one-stop route to invest across large, mid and small-cap stocks. These funds can be volatile drawdowns for multi cap portfolios.

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What Are Multi Cap Funds?

Multi cap schemes invest at least 25% each in large, mid and small cap stocks, with the balance at the fund manager's discretion. Fund managers can choose stocks across sectors, subject to these market-cap allocations. Large-cap companies are those ranked 1–100 by market capitalisation, mid-caps are ranked 101–250, and those beyond 250 are classified as smallcap companies. The category currently has 32 schemes, with about 1.1cr folios and assets worth ₹2.2 lakh crore.

How Different Is A Multi Cap Fund Compared To Other Popular Categories Like Flexi Cap?

Multi cap funds combine exposure to large, mid and small cap stocks within a single scheme, removing the need for investors to allocate separately across categories. However, unlike flexi cap or value funds, where managers can shift allocations depending on market conditions, multi cap funds are bound by regulation to maintain a minimum allocation to each segment. This limits the manager's ability to move defensively during periods of market stress. With at least 50% of the portfolio structurally allocated to mid and small-cap stocks, these funds tend to be more volatile than large cap or flexi cap funds. During corrections, sharper declines in smaller stocks can result in deeper

Who Should Consider Multi Cap Funds?

These funds are better suited for investors who are willing to stay invested across market cycles and are comfortable with higher exposure to mid and small cap stocks. They may appeal to investors seeking a single-fund approach across market capitalisations, but are less suited for those looking for downside protection during periods of volatility.

— PRASHANT MAHESH

Cheaper generics capture 20% of weight-loss mkt

Rupali.Mukherjee @timesofindia.com

New Delhi: A wave of affordable generic versions of Ozempic and Wegovy (semaglutide) has rapidly captured around 20% of the nearly Rs 1,600 crore weight-loss market within days of launch, following the drug's patent expiry on March 20.

A handful of early movers, including Torrent, Sun Pharma and Zydus Lifesciences, are already chipping away at the stronghold of innovator firm Eli Lilly, which markets the rival weight-loss shot, Mounjaro (tirzepatide).

Both semaglutide and tirzepatide belong to the GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) receptor agonists class, used for the management of type 2 diabetes and obesity.

Mounjaro, launched a year ago, has dominated the weight-loss and diabetes market since Oct last year, emerging as the largest-selling drug in the organised pharma retail market. It retained that position in March as well, clocking Rs 114 crore in sales. Launch of generics resulted in a Rs 21 crore dip in Mounjaro's March sales month-on-month, while simultaneously expanding the semaglutide market by Rs 10 crore, according to latest data from research firm Pharmarack.

Lower pricing by generics and the MNC firm Novo Nordisk, which markets Ozempic and Wegovy, as against tirzepatide, is bolstering semaglutide's position, according to Sheetal Sapale, vice-president (commercial) at the firm.

While Eli Lilly has seen its market share falling to 56% in March from around 70% in Oct last year, Novo Nordisk has proven more resilient against generic competition, retaining 25% share in GLP-1 segment, according to the data. In total, there were 26 brands launched by 13 companies in March. Further, generic companies including Torrent, Lupin, Zydus and Dr Reddy's that were early entrants in semaglutide market have grabbed considerable share.

Torrent is leading with a share of 8%, followed by Dr Reddy's, Zydus, Lupin and Sun Pharma. Higher share of Torrent could be attributed to the fact that it is offering both oral and injectable formulations.

Launch of generics resulted in a Rs 21 crore dip in Mounjaro's (Eli Lilly) March sales month-on-month

Gold, silver brace for turbulent week amid W Asia crisis

New Delhi: Precious metals may witness heightened volatility when markets open on Monday as the collapse of US-Iran negotiations keeps sentiment fragile and investors track domestic inflation and Chinese economic data, analysts said. Besides developments related to West Asia, traders will also monitor the US Producer Price Index (PPI), crude oil prices and speeches from several Federal Reserve officials for further direction on bullion prices, they said. Domestic commodities market will remain closed on Tuesday for the morning trade on account of Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar Jayanti. AGENCIES

Coal imports fall 8.5% in Feb on high stocks

New Delhi: India's coal imports dropped 8.5% to 16.6 million tonnes in Feb due to record domestic stockpiles and firm seaborne prices. Coal imports are likely to remain weak this month as domestic miners step up efforts to liquidate stockpiles.

"A record-high stockpile of domestic coal and firm seaborne prices resulted in a drop in thermal coal imports. With domestic miners endeavouring to liquidate stocks, the weak trend in imports is expected to continue during the current month," mjunction MD & CEO Vinaya Varma said. AGENCIES

India's GitHub developer base reaches 27 million; over 2 million added this year

Akhil.George@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: There are 27 million developers on GitHub in India, according to GitHub COO Kyle Daigle. More than two million joined the platform in just the first few months of this year — the highest from any country.

Daigle said India remains GitHub's fastest-growing developer community. "One in every seven developers joining GitHub are from India," he told TOI. He was in Bengaluru for the company's developer event over the weekend. He said the growth cannot be explained by population alone, pointing instead to a rising pipeline of younger, AI-native developers entering the ecosystem. "There's more excitement and interest from this first generation of AI-native software developers," he said, noting that students and even teenagers are contributing to projects.

Greater access to tools is also accelerating adoption. AI-assisted coding tools are lowering entry barriers and enabling developers to take on more complex work. "It's helping them solve bigger problems much more quickly," Daigle said, adding that the surge is visible not just in sign-ups but in activity levels.

India now has more open source contributors than any other country and ranks second only to the US in open source AI contributions. Developers from India have logged 7.5 million contributions to open source AI projects on GitHub.

> There's more excitement and interest in joining the developer community from this first era of AI-native developers. It's helping them solve bigger problems much more quickly. So the growth in numbers in India is a little bit expected — it's not just growth in numbers, it's growth in output as well
>
> **Kyle Daigle** COO, GITHUB

Daigle said the rise of AI agents is beginning to reshape how developers work. "We've never quite had a thinking partner that could scale the way AI agents can," he said, referring to tools that can plan tasks, solve problems and generate code before developers review the output.

He added that AI is expanding, not shrinking, the need for developers and security specialists. "There's more and more software being created, not less," Daigle said, pushing back against fears of job losses. As the volume of code, repositories and applications grows, so does the need to build, maintain and secure them. "There's always another problem that we can resolve," he said.

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CONTRAPUNTO

The end move in politics is always to pick up a gun

– R BUCKMINSTER FULLER

Talk, Don't Fight

That US, Iran met is a good beginning, even minus an agreement. Israel-Lebanon talks can offer an off-ramp to both

Vance's statement that US-Iran talks yielded no breakthrough, should not be a cause for quiet satisfaction anywhere in the world. It underscores a deeply unsettling reality: diplomacy, when most urgently needed, is still struggling to find traction. The global economy, already bruised by the six-week Iran war, has barely begun to stabilise. Oil prices, which briefly cooled to $95 after spiking close to $120, are poised to climb again. Ripple effects are unmistakable – fertilisers, polymers, and a wide range of downstream industries, remain under sustained pressure. In such a fragile moment, the prospect of renewed hostilities, is not just undesirable; it is untenable.

Perhaps expectations of a swift resolution were misplaced from the outset. The scale of devastation inflicted during the conflict runs deep. Coordinated US-Israel strikes significantly weakened Iran's political and military command structures, while also leaving civilian infra scarred. Tehran's retaliatory targeting of Gulf Arab states, meanwhile, marked a dangerous escalation, breaching long-standing red lines and intensifying mistrust. The animosity is real, layered, and far from easily resolved.

And yet, amid the bleakness, there is a sliver of cautious optimism. The very fact that both sides agreed to sit across the table marks a notable shift. This was their first direct engagement in a decade, and the highest-level dialogue since the Iranian Revolution. Diplomacy often begins not with agreement, but with willingness – and that, at least, has re-emerged. Still, the distance between positions remains vast. Iran seeks sweeping concessions: control over Strait of Hormuz, war reparations, and a region-wide ceasefire. Washington, by contrast, remains singularly focused on curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions and ensuring the reopening of Hormuz. Hovering over these demands is a profound deficit of trust. US withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018 continues to cast a long shadow, as does Iran's subsequent acceleration of uranium enrichment.

Complicating matters further is Iran's past use of diplomatic breathing room to expand its regional influence through groups like Hezbollah. Yet, abandoning dialogue now would be a grave miscalculation. The economic toll alone demands restraint: US inflation has surged sharply, while Iran faces a collapsing currency and staggering food inflation. What is urgently needed are off-ramps – pragmatic pathways to de-escalation. A potential opening may lie in upcoming Lebanon-Israel talks, which could end up cutting out Hezbollah, and offer all sides a face-saving exit. For now, the immediate priority is clear: extend the fragile ceasefire, resist the pull of escalation, and give diplomacy the time it, so desperately, requires.

Trim Reaper

Regulators can't be MIA as people buy weight-loss drugs off the internet, including from China

Many have a big medical need, others are merely driven by vanity. Either way, Indians are racing at predictable pace towards the 'magic pills' they have heard so much about, that could thin them without the 'bitter pills' of diet and exercise. It's helped that Novo Nordisk lost the patent for Semaglutide, the most used GLP-1 drug, in India in March. Brands have slashed prices, generics have started rolling out excitedly. And yet, as a **TOI** story highlighted yesterday, there are people choosing a third, dangerous alternative to the branded and generic meds. They are ingesting untested, unregulated drugs from China.

This can be about chasing the lowest-priced option. Or going DIY, instead of following doctor's orders. Or even buying hooey and hogwash, from some social media influencer. Content creators can be highly irresponsible launch monkeys. Sometimes, out of greed, and other times, because they don't know any better. Whatever the reason, medically unsupervised use of drugs that alter core metabolic signals inside the human body, is a mug's game. Laypersons have no idea if these meds interfere with the others they are taking. How to dose up and dose down are also highly technical matters.

The Chinese in-vitro drugs circulating in India, through the internet, need to be a wake-up call. This is what happens when doctors' prescriptions are replaced by an influencer's testimonial, and the pharmacy by Instagram DMs. Yes, NFHS-5 data indicates that around a quarter of both women and men in India, are either overweight or obese. In a way, we got here because of being bad at science, paying a heavy price for poor literacy in both nutrition and biology. This has, of course, been a failure of regulators, too. They really have to figure out how to stop the GLP-1 revolution from being captured by celeb tubers and muckamucks, bent on shooting scientific illiteracy to even more treacherous highs.

D for Dilemma

Alter-Me scores over Me and D2

Sunil Warrier

Startled by Me's reaction on skimming the show timings of D2, Alter-Me said, "I'm not accompanying you. It is longer than a T20 match." A determined Me in rising crescendo said, there is a show in almost every theatre, single or multiplex, every 30 minutes past the hour, throughout the day. "An emphatic no," was Alter-Me's absolute response.

Me wanted to opt for the 2.15 am show, so that we could return to wake the night-duty watchman, and welcome the doodhwala. "Not only will you sleep in the theatre, but you will also not be able to sleep on return," said Alter-Me.

Ok, what about the 6.30 am, 7.30 am, or 8.30 am shows? "Which means we have to wake up at unearthly hours to reach on time. We will struggle to even rise for the national anthem," said Alter-Me, who did not want to spend atrocious amounts for popcorn and samosa, "for breakfast".

Having watched D1, Me was definitely wanting to see what happens in the sequel. "I will sit with you max for 90 minutes. After that you can substitute me with any impact player," said Alter-Me, full of sarcasm.

Still amazed at D2 hijacking shows throughout day and night, into the third week, Me suggested other show timings. "I can't skip lunch at home by going for shows after 10, and can't go for shows after lunch, as it would be impolite not to nap in AC, given the heatwave outside," said Alter-Me. He also ruled out disturbing dinner.

Me was getting pretty annoyed at Alter-Me's stubbornness, but did not feel brave enough to see the reported gory scenes all alone. "Darpok, just shut your eyes for a few seconds, and they will be gone," counselled Alter-Me.

"BTW, shows are at less unearthly hours now," countered Me. "Just BTW too, what is the cost of the tickets?" asked Alter-Me.

The shriek that came when Me mentioned the astronomical figure, with a softly polite voice, was not from Alter-Me but from the Mrs, not Me's but Alter-Me's. "That's crazy. No need to pay so much, to watch something at unearthly hours, especially when we know both of you will be fast asleep, even before the interval. There are no technical timeouts here, okay," she said firmly. "We will wait for it to land on OTT," said Alter-Me, leaving Me nodding in capitulation.

Two Couldn't Tango, Now What?

That the talks collapsed was predictable. Trump may go for a naval blockade of Iran. That'll make Netanyahu happier. And Iran angrier. Expect renewed turbulence

Aydin Sezer

Columnist based in Ankara

A breeze of cautious optimism had swept through various diplomatic circles, as soon as it was announced that there would be US-Iran talks over the weekend. And even as Islamabad prepared to host these, it seemed that both Washington and Tehran were already rushing to declare victory. The real winner, of course, was common sense.

It had seemed to me that the two sides getting together at the same table, established through China's balancing power and Pakistan's mediation, was in fact a 'forced interval'. It's where weary boxers take a breather, rather than a lasting peace.

In this sense, what came out of Islamabad, or did not, would actually have been no surprise, to anyone following the matter closely. When JD Vance remarked that he was returning from Islamabad, without having reached an agreement, that, too, was generally along expected lines.

The truth is that, from the onset, no one had harboured grand illusions, about a deal coming through in Islamabad. Indeed, it would have been contrary to the nature of things, for a magical formula to have been found within such a short period, which would have 'reset' relations between Washington and Tehran, sort of returning both parties to their default settings. After all, none of the structural issues that triggered the present crisis have been resolved. On the contrary, new and far more complex knots have been tied on top of the pre-war situation.

● What happened at the table? Well, it was prefigured in what happened before everyone sat themselves down – in the high tension, harsh rhetoric, zero trust, countless preconditions, and only a tiny, intermittent window of diplomacy.

And the biggest obstacle? That was the vast chasm between the two parties' priorities. US elevated the security of Hormuz Strait – an issue not even on the agenda before Feb 28 – to the top priority. Iran, a master of the art of international negotiation, placed Israel's attacks on Lebanon, right at the centre of the table.

Fundamental issues such as Iran's nuclear programme, uranium enrichment activities, and ballistic missiles range, which harbour the real danger, were pushed into the background. We only heard the word 'nuclear' in the muttered remarks of Vance, on his way back.

At the table, Washington aimed to extract a clear and binding "commitment not to develop nuclear weapons" from Iran. Tehran refused even to negotiate on this issue. The fact that the nuclear issue retains its status as an indispensable 'red line' for Iran, will continue to be an existential threat, which keeps not only Israel and Netanyahu, but now also the Gulf states, awake at night.

Image: AI

● Who emerged as the winner at the table? Speaker of the Iranian parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf. Even though the Islamabad negotiations collapsed, this process has yielded an outcome of critical importance for Iran's domestic politics. The fact that Ghalibaf made himself visible during such a critical period, and took the initiative of stepping into the fray, was no ordinary bureaucratic assignment.

Ghalibaf proving his mettle here, is the strongest indication that he will emerge as the new and pragmatic centre of power in Iranian domestic politics in the post-Khamenei era, possibly even in an early presidential race. That is, provided he does not lose his life, in an Israeli or US attack.

● Who would the talks' collapse have pleased? Netanyahu. He, and Israel, had earlier seemed in danger of being the biggest losers, in any equation where a ceasefire would be formulated between US and Iran, in Islamabad. Now, talks collapsed, Netanyahu is looking at a scenario he had desired from the very beginning.

It is now highly likely that the Trump administration will place greater emphasis on the other, hardline options at its disposal, and options to hasten 'regime change' in Iran. Trump's threat to impose a full-scale 'naval blockade' on Iran, reveals a key to the process ahead. A strategy aimed at blocking Iran's access to the coast, will mean intensified attacks by the US-Israel bloc. It will also pave the way for Nato and/or European forces to join a new *de facto* blockade in Hormuz Strait, under the pretext of securing global energy routes.

● Is the global economy now on knife's edge? Yes. Although Brent crude eased to around $95 when the Islamabad talks began, we were still a long way from the pre-crisis range of $65-70. Collapse of the negotiations, and looming scenarios of a naval blockade, will reignite uncertainty in energy and financial markets. Given the inflationary bottleneck the world is currently navigating, there is scarcely any need to explain what even the slightest spark from Hormuz Strait would mean, for global supply chains and the economy.

In conclusion, the curtains appear to have come down on diplomatic theatre, for now. In the coming weeks, all parties will likely harden their negotiating positions, through military manoeuvres on the ground. Still, we must not forget that in international relations, doors are never fully locked.

Let us hope that this failure is not the beginning of a bloodier conflict, but rather a painful part of 'necessary pause', during which the parties will test their strength. We have no choice but to hope that the window of diplomacy does not close completely, even if only the tiniest of cracks remains open.

The writer is a former Turkish diplomat

She Sang India's Hidden Desires, Her Songs Anticipated Change

The best kind of music, like Asha Bhosle's songs, tells us where society is headed. The best kind of tribute, never mind India's official idea of itself, is that everyone, at some point, has hummed Dum Maro Dum

Partha Sinha

There are countries that legislate themselves into being. India, more often than it admits, has sung itself into coherence. Not in unison. Never in unison. But in a duet that it pretended was a solo.

Asha Bhosle, who died yesterday at 92, was the second voice in that duet, the one the republic did not officially endorse, but could not stop listening to.

Jacques Attali argued that music does not merely reflect society; it anticipates it. It rehearses futures before institutions are ready to host them. It whispers possibilities that the law will only later learn to pronounce. By that measure, Asha Bhosle was not just a singer. She was an early warning system.

To understand what she warned us about, one must return, briefly, reluctantly, to the Lata-Asha binary. Lata Mangeshkar was the voice the nation chose to recognise itself in. Controlled, ethereal, almost deliberately de-bodied. It aligned beautifully with the post-independence imagination of femininity: dignified, restrained, morally legible.

Asha was something else entirely. Her voice had texture. It carried breath, hesitation, suggestion. It sounded like a body that refused to fade into respectability.

This was not an aesthetic difference. It was moral zoning. The nation needed a pure sound to represent itself publicly. But it also needed somewhere to place everything that did not fit into that purity: desire, play, ambiguity, mischief. So it built a second channel. And then, in a move of quiet genius, outsourced it to the same family.

Every Oct in Kolkata, something instructive happened. The Durga Puja pandals ran loudspeakers through the night, and the cultured Bengali, who spent the remaining eleven months carefully curating his aesthetic respectability, discovered a sudden, convenient amnesia. Rabindra Sangeet could wait. The request, again and again, was for Asha. *Dum Maro Dum. O Mere Sona Re.*

This was not a lapse. This was the point. Pujo is, among other things, a society's annual licence for abandon, the carnival that strengthens the order it briefly suspends. The goddess arrives, rules loosen, and loudspeakers say, without embarrassment, what drawing rooms edit out.

Asha Bhosle was the sound that Bengali bhadralok culture reached for, the moment it was given permission to stop performing itself. The anthropologists have a name for this mechanism. The rest of us just hummed along.

The word most frequently used to describe her has been "versatile". It sounds like praise. It is, in fact, a cultural workaround: a polite container for tonalities that made the culture slightly nervous. Her voice had what Roland Barthes called grain, that irreducible body inside the sound that no amount of cultural coding can fully discipline. Even when the words behaved, the voice suggested otherwise.

Listen to *Dum Maro Dum* today and it still carries a certain looseness, a refusal to be domesticated by its own narrative. The film disapproves. The song does not care. The state banned it from *All India Radio*. The public repeated it until the ban became irrelevant. Music had moved ahead. Culture took its time catching up.

Image by AI, from a Photograph

The playback system was built to keep these two things apart: the actress performed the narrative, the singer carried the emotional surplus. Asha inhabited the surplus. She sang for characters who would eventually be corrected by the script, but the suspension lasted longer than the correction.

Men in cultural production are granted the privilege of distance. Women are asked to remain legible, anchored to narrative. Asha's voice constantly slipped that anchoring. Which is perhaps why it required so much interpretation.

Then there is the matter of scale. Twelve thousand songs. At some point admiration gives way to a more complicated recognition. This is not just artistry. It is infra. A voice industrialised at a volume that has no parallel in recorded history.

Yet, within that scale she retained a capacity for surprise. A turn of phrase. A tonal shift. A refusal to be entirely standardised. She worked inside the system, and kept exceeding it, not by revolt, but by increments so consistent, they became their own argument.

Near the end, the culture revealed itself most plainly. When Asha Bhosle sang Rabindra Sangeet, a section of Bengal's cultural establishment objected. The controversy was dressed in aesthetic language, purity of rendition, fidelity to tradition, but its emotional content was something older and less comfortable.

The woman who had given voice to the nation's desires was being told she had not earned the right to sing its prayers. The same Madonna-Vamp binary, which the film industry had enforced structurally for five decades, was now being enforced explicitly, in public, with cultural credentials as the instrument.

The same culture that reached for her voice every Pujo night questioned her standing in the devotional register. The permission it granted at the pandal, it withdrew at the concert hall.

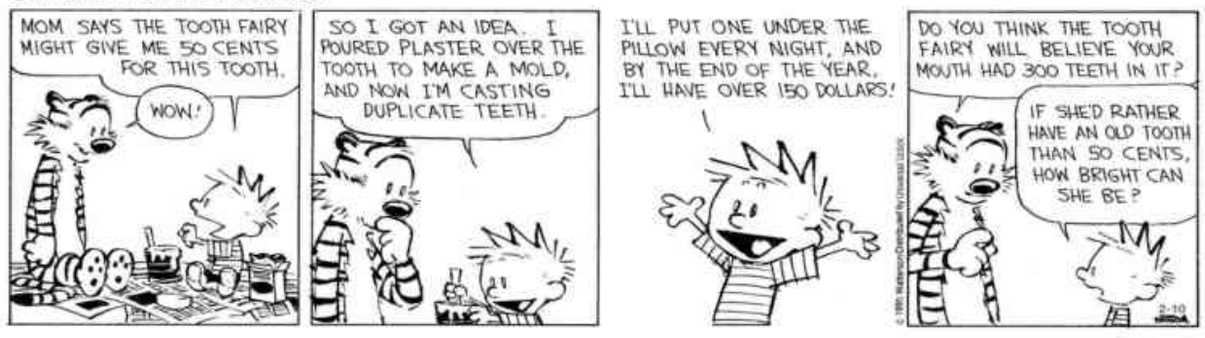
This is not contradiction. This is the system working precisely as designed. India has always liked to believe that it knows what it is. Its music suggests otherwise.

The nation articulated one version of itself in public. It rehearsed another in private, at the pandal loudspeaker, in the kitchen, through the transistor radio in rooms where no one was keeping score. It placed one voice at the centre of its official imagination, and allowed the other to circulate, in what it called the margins. Except those margins, over time, became memory. We were the ones humming. We simply preferred not to say so.

Asha Bhosle gave sound to what the culture could not formally accommodate. And if Attali is right, if music truly anticipates the society that follows, then she did not just sing the India that was. She sang the India that was still becoming.

We heard it first as a tune. It has taken us this long to realise it was the truth we were rehearsing.

Calvin & Hobbes


MOM SAYS THE TOOTH FAIRY MIGHT GIVE ME 50 CENTS FOR THIS TOOTH.
WOW!
SO I GOT AN IDEA. I POURED PLASTER OVER THE TOOTH TO MAKE A MOLD, AND NOW I'M CASTING DUPLICATE TEETH.
I'LL PUT ONE UNDER THE PILLOW EVERY NIGHT, AND BY THE END OF THE YEAR, I'LL HAVE OVER 150 DOLLARS!
DO YOU THINK THE TOOTH FAIRY WILL BELIEVE YOUR MOUTH HAD 300 TEETH IN IT?
IF SHE'D RATHER HAVE AN OLD TOOTH THAN 50 CENTS, HOW BRIGHT CAN SHE BE?

Sacred*space*

Even if things don't unfold the way you expected, don't be disheartened or give up. One who continues to advance will win in the end.

Daisaku Ikeda

Peace, Not War: Reconciliation Is Best

Farida Khanam

The month-long military confrontation involving US, Israel, and Iran, which began in late Feb, was suspended on March 25, 2026, under a temporary ceasefire. The conflict claimed nearly 5,000 lives, and left a trail of destruction in terms of infra, environment, and human livelihoods.

In the present age of weapons of mass destruction, the real cost of war has become impossible to ignore. As Chamberlain observed, "In war, whichever side may call itself the victor, there are no winners, but all are losers." What appears to be a victory ultimately turns into a loss, both material and environmental.

A person in New Delhi associated with medical tourism once remarked on the impact of prolonged wars in countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. The effects, he said, have been devastating. The use of explosives and chemical weapons has left entire populations vulnerable to cancer and other serious illnesses. Even those not directly involved in the fighting have suffered. Physical disabilities, too, have become widespread. This is why the Quran says, "reconciliation is best" (4:128), not that war is best.

Today, nations are deeply interconnected. A conflict in one region quickly affects others. The recent energy crisis is one example. The ongoing tensions in West Asia have had repercussions not only there, but also in Europe, US, India, and across Asia.

THE SPEAKING TREE

In such a world, war is no longer an option. It does not move humanity forward – it pushes it back. For this reason, both religious wisdom and secular thought reject war and urge that every path leading to conflict be closed – even if it requires restraint and compromise. Prophet Muhammad provides a clear historical example of his method in negotiating the Hudaybiya peace treaty. On the occasion, he brought matters to a successful conclusion by unilaterally accepting his opponents' conditions.

In this peace treaty, the Prophet had not apparently received justice or his rights. What was in effect a 10-year no-war pact gave the Prophet an opportunity to work uninterruptedly on a constructive programme, which would otherwise have been impossible. Though it appeared to be a one-sided concession at first, it later proved to be a clear victory. A modern parallel is Japan, which, after apparent submission in making peace with the United States, rapidly advanced in other fields.

The Prophet said that God grants through nonviolence what He does not grant through violence (Sahih Muslim). This shows that peaceful action is superior to violent action. War only deepens hatred, destroys resources, and leads to the loss of precious lives. As Maulana Wahiduddin Khan writes, peace is not simply the absence of war, but the creation of opportunities. Peace creates favourable conditions that would enable us to strive for justice and other constructive ends.

Violence and peace both have wide connotations. Violence includes everything from hatred to war. Peace includes everything from tolerance to love. Peace means normalcy, and normalcy provides opportunities that foster a healthy environment.

Peace is essential for a better way of living: peace of mind, peace in the family, and peace in nature. The way forward must, therefore, rest on peace and negotiation. The Quran lays down the principle clearly: "And if they incline to peace, then incline to it" (8:61). Promoting a culture of peace is not only necessary, it is more relevant today than ever before.

The writer is chairperson, Centre for Peace and Spirituality International, New Delhi

AI reshapes engg roles as mass hiring for traditional jobs falls 20-30%

Companies are increasing their focus on high-skill profiles and are offering 10-40% higher salary packages to the suitable candidates

Inconsistent hiring leaves KVs grappling with teacher crunch

Fee hike triggers higher dropouts in Sainik Schools

Ships to smart sea exploration: Ocean Engineering rides a new AI wave

Bengaluru's Sanjana bags state rank 4 in 2nd PUC

Cabaret to global pop, Asha lived 'crossover' before it was buzzword

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There are singers who belong to an era, and then there is Asha Bhosle, who treated decades like passing trends she would dip into and then outdo.

A vocal sponge, Bhosle was soaking up the pop and jazz greats long before the internet made it easy. "I used to watch Carmen Miranda a lot and try to imitate her style," she had said in an interview, "like I did later with Shirley Bassey."

Tucked into voluminous saris, the Asha tai who loved dishing out her signature 'Maa ki Dal' and jaggery kheer was the same woman who watched Bill Haley's Rock Around the Clock three times just to nail the phrasing for 'Eena Meena Deeka'; who received a letter from the Vatican for her rendition of 'Ave Maria'; and became the first Indian singer to form a pop group overseas in Britain, the West India Company, in the 1980s.

At a time when playback voices in India were still neatly boxed — classical, romantic, devotional — Bhosle was slipping between them. Trained in Hindustani classical music, she said, "If you have the desire and riyaz... you can sing anything." She wandered into cabaret, jazz, rock 'n' roll, and global pop long before the industry had quite figured out what to call any of it.

The turning point, as many stories go, arrived with the Burmans. S D Burman first showed her how to add her own 'inputs' to a track to make it work, but it was with R D Burman it started taking root when the duo would sit up until 4am listening to jazz and rock. When he handed her 'Aaja Aaja' for Teesri Manzil, she is said to have balked at its Westernised swagger. This wasn't a tune you could approach like a ghazal. It needed breathless phrasing and a loose shrug. Ten days of rehearsal later, she owned it so completely that it now sounds like it was always hers.

That became a pattern. Whether it was the smokey, rhythmic breathing of 'Piya Tu Ab Toh Aaja' or the pop-ballad ease of 'Chura Liya Hai,' Bhosle could adjust her vocal cords to match every mood.

HER SONGS WILL FOREVER ECHO IN PEOPLE'S LIVES: PM

"... One of the most iconic and versatile voices India has ever known. Her extraordinary musical journey enriched our cultural heritage... Her soulful melodies carried timeless brilliance... She will continue to inspire generations, and her songs will forever echo in people's lives
— PM Narendra Modi

"Asha Tai not only carved out a unique identity with her sweet voice but also enriched Indian music further through her melodies. Her extraordinary ability to adapt to every genre of music won over every heart... Through her voice, she will forever remain in our hearts
— Home minister Amit Shah

"The news of the demise of the great singer Asha Bhosle ji is extremely heartbreaking. Through her voice, her art will forever remain immortal among us
— LoP Rahul Gandhi

"As a playback singer, she lent her voice to thousands of films and music albums. The echo of her sweet melodies will resonate forever
— Defence minister Rajnath Singh

"...An era of playback singing comes to an end. An epitome of legendary versatility and grace, her unique style of singing was appreciated by millions across the globe
— Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge

"A legend whose voice defined eras, Asha Bhosle Ji leaves behind an enduring musical legacy. Her contribution to Indian music will always be remembered with deep respect
— I&B minister Ashwini Vaishnaw

SUPER 11 Tracks

- **Aaiye meherbaan** | Howrah Bridge (1958)
- **Aage bhi jaane na tu** | Waqt (1965)
- **Aaja aaja, main hoon pyar tera** | Teesri Manzil (1966)
- **Piya tu ab toh aaja** | Caravan (1971)
- **Raat akeli hai** | Jewel Thief (1967)
- **Chura liya hai tumne jo dil ko** | Yaadon Ki Baraat (1973)
- **Dum maaro dum** | Hare Rama Hare Krishna (1971)
- **Chain se humko kabhi** | Pran Jaye Par Vachan Na Jaye (1974)
- **Phirse aaiyo badra bidesi** | Namkeen (1982)
- **In aankhon ki masti** | Umrao Jaan (1981)
- **Mera kuchh saamaan** | Ijaazat (1987)

By the 1990s, when 'crossover' became a buzzword, she was already living it. "I told my son Anand, I've sung in practically every Indian language but I haven't done English," she had said of her jump into the West India Company. It was a leap into the unknown that would have terrified a lesser artist. "Although the music was ready, there was no fixed tune to sing. I had created my own tune and melody when I went in to record," she said about merging Indian vocals with Western club rhythms and electronic music.

This ability to improvise allowed her to record 'Bow Down Mister' with Boy George, where Indian devotional strains met synth-heavy pop. It could have been a gimmick. Instead, it sounded like a natural extension of what she had always done with unaffected ease.

At 64, she stepped into the centre of the MTV glare. She teamed up with Code Red for the ballad 'We Can Make It' and appeared in a music video, matching the baggy-clothed boy band and their R&B groove with her silk sari and alaaps. Soon after, she appeared on 'The Way You Dream' with REM's Michael Stipe for his multimedia project '1 Giant Leap', a track that drifted into Hollywood with the 2003 action-comedy film 'Bulletproof Monk'.

By the 1990s, when 'crossover' became a buzzword, Asha Bhosle was already living it

Bhosle did not so much cross over from East to West as meet it, on equal terms. Cornershop's 'Brimful of Asha' turned her into a cultural reference point, later remixed by Fatboy Slim into a club staple. Black Eyed Peas sampled her in 'Don't Phunk with My Heart', tucking her voice into early-2000s hip-hop. Sarah Brightman lifted 'Dil Cheez Kya Hai' into operatic pop. In 2005, the Kronos Quartet built an album around her, 'You've Stolen My Heart'. She recorded the R D Burman classics with such velocity — three to four songs a day — the quartet struggled to keep up. It earned her a Grammy nomination.

Even in later years, she seemed game for unlikely pairings, whether it was a duet with cricketer Brett Lee to collaborations with Pakistani pop singer Jawad Ahmed that ignored the politics of the moment.

Which brings us to 2026. Bhosle, well into her nineties, recording 'The Shadowy Light' from her Pedder Road home for the genre-blurring British virtual band Gorillaz — her voice against a swirl of hip-hop, dub and electronica, with an old harmonium in the mix — in what would be her final collaboration.

'With Umrao Jaan, she gave Lucknow a permanence'

Muzaffar Ali

Asha Bhosle was never just a voice; she was a presence — one that entered a moment and made it eternal. Voices fade, but hers has only withdrawn into a deeper chamber of memory, where it will continue to resonate for those who have known longing through song.

Each time she sang, something unseen was summoned — an alchemy of *sur* and soul that refused to belong to time. When I approached her for 'Umrao Jaan', with Khayyam shaping the music and Shahryar giving it language, to inhabit the world of Rekha, she sensed immediately that this was not a recording — it was a reckoning.

"She gave Lucknow a permanence that cinema had long denied it. In an industry often without place, she created one"

She understood that she would have to travel beyond craft. That she would have to become the voice of a civilisation that once lived in *tehzeeb*, in restraint, in unspoken ache. She gave Lucknow a permanence that cinema had long denied it. In an industry often without place, she created one.

To bring her into Awadh was not direction — it was invocation. The only distant echo was Begum Akhtar. Yet even that was not imitation, but inheritance. Both carried that rare, unnameable gift — the ability to dissolve and become. She knew this without being told. And she met it with something that cannot be rehearsed — surrender. She did not sing the character; she yielded to it. Such truth is rare in the architecture of commercial Hindi cinema. It is rarer still to be recognised, as it was, at the 29th National Film Awards.

(The writer is the director of 'Umrao Jaan')

The Three Pasts of the Present

CITY CITY BANG BANG

SANTOSH DESAI

What was once a food meant for those who could afford nothing else is back as a superfood of choice. Millets are now seen as a food for those with evolved tastes. As are jowar, bajra and ragi. Millet and so many other grains that an earlier generation had striven to leave behind. Handloom now has a special sheen, and the surest way to sell something at three times the price is to put the word 'artisanal' in front of it. Is this nostalgia, this reaching back into the recesses of the past to retrieve something and attach a new value to it?

It might appear that we are nostalgic about the past, that we are recovering lost memories, but something else might be at work here. For what we are enacting is not a replay of tradition but a simulation of memory. None of the people raving about millets had any in their past. They did not grow up eating that, perhaps even their parents did not. There is a recognition that this is part of a collective past, quite detached from personal memory. It is a memory of a self that never existed, of someone else's past.

What this simulated memory does is to provide a new kind of anchor that looks as if it has been there all along. It is appealing because it has the appearance of authenticity, of groundedness. At a time when we construct and perform ourselves through acts of consumption, every choice is a statement. We become who we are through choices that must be continuously performed. This is a world where consumption is organised around verbs rather than nouns, around doing and experiencing rather than having and holding. The simulated past provides gravity.

This gives us a past without the complications that an actual past brings. No obligations, no constraints, none of the entanglements that actually coming from somewhere involves. The craft gin with the regional botanical, the revived festival with the curated ritual, the heritage grain with the origin story on the label: all of these offer depth without roots, connection without cost.

But this is only the surface of the layers that make up the country. A large part of the country does not need to perform a retelling of the past, but continues to be embedded in it. Caste for instance is a structure that operates at a subterranean level. It sits in our surnames, mediates marriages, influences residential clusters, governs implicit rules about who can do what where. Even in the parts of the country which think of it as invisible, it appears in the way household help is treated, what spaces they are allowed to share, and what aspirations they are allowed to have. One does not need to believe in caste, or to notice it, for caste to structure one's life.

Gender operates similarly. The distribution of labour within the household, who waits and who is served, who speaks and who is consulted: these are not remembered traditions. They are inhabited structures. They persist not because anyone is reviving them but because nobody needs to. They were never lost.

The past in India takes three different forms. The first is the past that continues largely unhindered: habit, custom, practice that feels instinctive. Here no one is consciously making a choice. The second is actual lived memory. The past that one has experienced growing up. When one made pickle at home, and every festival meant weeks of preparation, cooking foods consumed specifically at that time. The third is simulated memory: the past as conscious retrieval, deliberate, performative, available to be put to work in the service of present-day needs.

The deepest irony in contemporary India may be this: the revivalist project, the conscious, loud, assertive retrieval of tradition, is most active precisely where tradition is feared to have weakened. The people most embedded in structural continuity, the rural, the lower-caste, the poor, are rarely the ones singing odes to millets. They do not need to. They are still living inside the past in the most literal sense.

This is not to say that all revival is false. It is based on a reality that has been transposed from its original setting and customised to meet the needs of the present. But the mechanism through which it operates, the simulation of a memory one does not possess, is identical regardless of what it is put in the service of. A beautiful textile and a bruising political campaign can both draw on the same simulated past. The structure is the same. What differs is what gets done with it.

The past is always, in some ways, imagined to serve the purposes of the present. We make the past what we need from it. Today it seems that we need the past largely to fulfil our identity needs. At one end of the spectrum it takes the form of self-conscious consumption of a curated past. At the other, the certainty that comes from defending something we believe we have always been. Neither is more authentic than the other. But not every act of recovery is as gentle as choosing a grain.

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NIA detains Congress nominee, 3 others over Malda unrest

Subhro Maitra | TNN

Malda: The NIA has detained Congress' Mothabari candidate Sayem Choudhury, gram panchayat member Golam Rabbani, and two others for questioning in connection with the April 1 violence in Mothabari, where seven judicial officers were confined for eight hours at Kaliachak-II block office in Bengal's Malda district.

Sources said Choudhury and Rabbani were among the crowd that gathered outside the office that morning.

Rabbani, an ISF panchayat member, was reportedly seen addressing villagers, mostly women whose names had been deleted from the electoral roll. NIA, which took over the probe following a Supreme Court order, has already taken custody of 50 people earlier arrested by police.

India rejects another Chinese bid to rename Arunachal places

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: With China undertaking another exercise to rename places in Arunachal Pradesh, India has categorically rejected "any mischievous attempts by the Chinese side to assign fictitious names to places which form part of the territory of India".

In a statement, ministry of external affairs (MEA) said such actions detract from ongoing efforts to stabilise and normalise India-China ties. Govt further said that China should refrain from moves which inject negativity into relations. Beijing has given Chinese names to 23 places in Arunachal in what is the 6th such exercise in the past 10 years to reinforce its claim over the Indian state it calls Zangnan.

"Such attempts by China at introducing false claims and manufacturing baseless narratives cannot alter the undeniable reality that these places and territories, including Arunachal Pradesh, were, are and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

IANS

China has renamed places in Arunachal Pradesh five times

India's response also followed reports from Beijing that China had set up a new county in its Xinjiang province, apparently to ramp up security along the narrow Wakhan Corridor to curb infiltration of Uyghur separatist militants. A PTI report said the county named Cenling is located near the Karakoram mountain range and close to the borders with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and Afghanistan, underscoring its strategic significance. This is the third new county established by China in Xinjiang, a predominantly Muslim Uyghur region, in just over a year.

India had last year lodged a protest with China over creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating that parts of their jurisdiction fall within its Union territory of Ladakh.

China has in the past renamed places in Arunachal Pradesh five times – in 2017, 2021, 2023, 2024 and 2025. On the last occasion – India had described the exercise as preposterous, saying that creative naming will not alter the undeniable reality that Arunachal Pradesh remains an integral and inalienable part of India.

China claims not just Tawang in Arunachal but effectively the entire state, saying it's a part of south Tibet, even as the Tibetan govt-in-exile holds that Arunachal is a part of India.

EAM highlights strategic ties during UAE visit

TNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi: Foreign minister S Jaishankar Sunday called on UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and discussed the West Asia crisis and its economic impact, while also thanking him for taking care of the local Indian community. Jaishankar is the second minister to visit the Gulf region, after petroleum minister Hardeep Puri who was in Qatar last week.

Jaishankar told a news agency, "I brought with me a message from PM Modi, and our conversation focused on our strategic relationship and its various initiatives, such as energy, economic trade, and the energy and trade relationship. The UAE is a major partner for us, so we discussed that." It is understood that Dubai Crown Prince and UAE Deputy PM, Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, was also present during Jaishankar's meeting with the UAE president.

Student death: Audio clip alleges faculty abuse

Kannur/T'puram: An audio message attributed to BDS student Nithin Raj, 23, alleges harassment by faculty at a dental college near Ancharakandi in Kannur district, while his family claims he was repeatedly targeted over caste, complexion and finances.

Raj died Friday afternoon after falling from a college building. In the audio clip, the student from an SC community purportedly speaks of threats and humiliation. "The staff room is the place where they attack us as a group. Each one is worse than the other there... I was told my limbs will be chopped if I leave the gates, and I will have to live without my hands for the rest of my life." College management suspended two faculty members — head of dental anatomy MK Ram and associate professor Sangeetha.

Pindrajora cops shielded accused in return for bribes, SP told high court

▶ Continued from page 1

The teenager was reported missing after leaving home on July 21, 2025, to submit an application at Chas College at Kurra in Bokaro district. Her mother said she visited Pindrajora police station that day but her complaint wasn't accepted.

Bokaro SP Harvinder Singh told the high court at a hearing last Friday that the case was reported on July 24 but the FIR wasn't registered until Aug 4. The probe moved only after the victim's mother filed a habeas corpus plea in the high court this Feb. After successive hearings till April 7, a special investigation team and a one-member committee headed by DIG Sandhaya Rani Mehta was formed. The suspect, 26-year-old Dinesh Kumar Mahto, was arrested over the weekend.

SP Singh said an internal probe revealed serious lapses and alleged misconduct by everyone at Pindrajora police station. "We have learnt that the accused was shielded in return for bribes in cash and kind."

My daughter would have been alive if they had shown some seriousness. If it were a case involving any influential person, the entire police machinery would have worked overnight
Victim's mother

The victim's mother, a daily-wage earner's wife, told TOI after performing her daughter's last rites, that police kept "playing football with the case" for seven months. "Right from the start, the OC and his men tried to discourage and intimidate us through various means to stop pursuing the case because they were bribed," she said. Police said Dinesh had confessed to killing the teenager near Chas College after she allegedly pressured him for marriage. He claimed the two were in a relationship for nearly three years before breaking up.

Accusations of police sabotage include an incident in Dec when an anonymous caller claimed to have seen the missing girl in Pune . The informant, a native of Gomia in Bokaro, was traced and asked to accompany the team to Pune.

"On reaching Pune, cops told my husband that the informant had escaped and they will have to look for him first. They left my husband alone at the station. My husband's phone got stolen and he was stranded there. We arranged funds for his return after much trouble," the bereaved mother said. She moved the high court with the help of local social workers.

ET THE ECONOMIC TIMES

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A TIMES INTERNET INITIATIVE

CITY CLOSE GAP

Pump Three Past Chelsea To Turn The Heat On Arsenal

Getty Images

Marc Guehi scores Man City's second goal

Manchester: Manchester City ignited the Premier League title race with a second-half blitz that sealed a 3-0 win against Chelsea as they closed the gap on leaders Arsenal on Sunday.

Pep Guardiola's side produced a devastating spell immediately after half-time, with Nico O'Reilly and Marc Guehi scoring in the space of six minutes at Stamford Bridge.

Jeremy Doku wrapped up a statement victory to ensure City took advantage of Arsenal's shock 2-1 home defeat against Bournemouth on Saturday.

Second-placed City are now only six points behind Arsenal with a game in hand, setting up a seismic showdown against the Gunners at the Etihad Stadium on April 19.

Having beaten Arsenal in the League Cup final and thrashed Liverpool in the FA Cup quarter-finals, City are hitting form at just the right time.

Their bid for a seventh English title under Guardiola appeared to be fading after successive draws with strugglers West Ham and Nottingham Forest in their previous two league matches.

Ngumoha makes Anfield history

Liverpool: Liverpool's teenaged winger Rio Ngumoha became the club's youngest to score a Premier League goal at Anfield on Saturday before Mohamed Salah, who will leave the club at season end, struck four minutes later in a 2-0 win over Fulham that boosted their quest for a top-five finish. AGENCIES

Barcelona move nine points clear at top

Barcelona: Barcelona took a major step towards retaining their LaLiga title with a 4-1 home victory over Espanyol on Saturday, moving nine points clear of second-placed Real Madrid.

LA LIGA

Ferran Torres struck twice, assisted by Lamine Yamal both times, first with a header from a corner in the 10th minute before doubling the lead in the 25th, racing clear from another Yamal pass.

Espanyol pulled one back in the 56th minute when Pol Lozano fired in a rebound from just inside the box, but Yamal restored control in the 87th on a quick counter, with Marcus Rashford adding a fourth from Frenkie De Jong's cross.

Barca moved to 79 points with seven games left, while Real lost ground after a 1-1 draw with Girona on Friday.

"It's not over until we've won the league, but it's only up to us and that's a great feeling," Torres told DAZN.

"It was a tough, hard-fought match, the scoreline doesn't tell the whole story. It was close, some little mistakes almost cost us dearly. But we're proud of our performance." REUTERS

Union Berlin's Eta first female coach in top Euro leagues

Berlin: Union Berlin has appointed Marie-Louise Eta as the first female head coach in the men's Bundesliga as they bid to ensure their league survival.

She becomes the first woman to take charge of a men's team across the top divisions of Europe's "big five" soccer leagues. Eta was coaching Union's Under-19 men's team.

Milan's title hopes dashed after loss

Milan: AC Milan relinquished any remaining hope of winning the Serie A title on Saturday after falling to a shock 3-0 home defeat by Udinese, while Juventus beat Atalanta 1-0 to move into the Champions League positions. A Davide Bartesaghi own goal and Jurgen Ekkelenkamp's glancing header in the first half, and Arthur Atta's superb low finish in the 71st minute, left Milan nine points behind Inter Milan.

Ayush signs off with silver

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World champion Shi Yu Qi ended Ayush Shetty's brilliant run at the Badminton Asia Championships with a straight-game victory 21-8, 21-10, in Ningbo, China, on Sunday. Shi won his first Asian championship gold, which apparently is the first men's singles title for China in nine years.

Sunday's result notwithstanding, Ayush will cherish the memorable week he had in Ningbo. The 20-year-old has a lot to cheer about. He beat some of the best in the world to win the only silver

ASIA CHAMPIONSHIPS

for India at the Continental championships. Dinesh Khanna won the men's singles gold in 1965, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty clinched the men's doubles gold in 2023 while several Indians had won bronze medals at this championship.

A day after knocking out world No.1 and defending champion Kunlavut Vitidsarn, Ayush was off-colour against world No.2. Controlling the pace of the game, Shi started with a 4-0 lead, extended it to 10-5 before winning the first game without breaking a sweat in 21-8.

AFP

PODIUM FINISH: Ayush Shetty

After losing the first set without putting up a fight, Ayush started the second with a 7-2 lead and revived memories of his excellent fight back against Kunlavut on Saturday. At 7-2, he misjudged a line call, hit the next one out and was unable to retrieve a smash. Those three points shifted the momentum in Shi's favour.

The 30-year-old used his experience and rattled the Indian defence with a string of smashes and cross-court drives. He won eleven of the next 12 points to secure a healthy 13-8 lead.

Ayush was clueless and did little to break the rhythm of Shi. The Chinese champion did well to keep the shuttle out of the hitting zone of the Indian.

Summing up the final, his coach Vimal Kumar said, "Ayush came up against a top-quality opponent in Shi Yu Qi, and the match clearly showed the difference that experience, control and tactical discipline can make at the highest level. Shi controlled the tempo brilliantly, denying Ayush the rhythm he usually thrives on."

Nevertheless, Vimal said Ayush had a significant week. "Matches like these are invaluable. They expose exactly what is required to compete consistently with the very best in the world. The gaps are clear — better shot variation, improved rally construction, tighter control under pressure and smarter point building," said Vimal. With his phenomenal performance over the last few months, Ayush has shown that he belongs to the big stage.

World No.1 An Se Young of South Korea defeated Wang Zhi Yi of China 21-12, 17-21, 21-18 for the women's singles title.

Other final results (Men's doubles): 1-Kim Won Ho/Seo Seung Jae (Kor) bt Kang Min Hyuk/Ki Dong Ju (Kor) 21-13, 21-17. **Women's doubles:** 8-Li Yi Jing/Luo Xu Min (Chn) bt 1-Liu Sheng Shu/Tan Ning (Chn) 5-8, retd. **Mixed:** Kim Jae Hyeon/Jang Ha Jeong (Kor) w/o 3-Dechapol Puavaranukrolv/Supissara Paewsampran (Tha).

SNAP SHOTS

Aman, Mukul clinch silver

Olympic medallist Aman Sehrawat settled for a silver while Mukul Dahiya also lost his final on Sunday as India signed off from the Asian Wrestling Championships in Bishkek with 17 medals. In the men's freestyle 61kg, Aman lost the high-scoring final 10-13 to Korea's Kwang Myong Kim. Mukul went down 0-7 against Iran's Kamran G Ghasempour in the men's 86kg freestyle final. Dinesh won his bronze play-off with a technical superiority (12-1) win over Arslanbek Turdubekov of Kyrgyzstan in the 125kg final.

Sonam finishes fifth: Sonam Maskar put up a brave fight but finished fifth in the women's 10m air rifle final as India concluded their World Cup (Rifle/Pistol) campaign in Granada with one gold medal on Sunday. Sonam shot 188.5, bowing out after the 18th shot of the 24-shot final. World No. 1 Wang Zifei of China won gold with a score of 252.9.

Gout powers to 200m win: Teenage sprint sensation Gout Gout ran a blistering 19.67 seconds to win the 200m at the Australian championships, faster than Usain Bolt at the same age.

Barwal sets national mark

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Bengaluru: Sawan Barwal fell twice within the final 150 metres, but refused to stay down. As the clock ticked, a volunteer helped the Armyman back on his feet, and the soldier from Himachal Pradesh summoned his last reserves of energy to cross the finish line in 2 hours, 11 minutes and 58 seconds at the NN Marathon in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on Sunday.

For the 28-year-old making his marathon debut, it was a dream finish as he eclipsed the 47-year-old mark of 2:12:00 set by Shivanath Singh on May 28, 1978 in Jalandhar. "Today's marathon was a tough but memorable experience. I felt strong and in control until around 40 km, I was progressing at 2:09 pace but the last 2 km didn't go as planned. I even fell twice before the finish line due to strong cold wind, but

MARATHON

I'm proud that I kept getting up and finished the race," said Barwal, who also holds the national half marathon record at 1:02 set in New Delhi in 2024.

"I'm extremely happy to have broken the 47-year-old national record, even if it's by a small margin. That means a lot to me. A special thanks to the volunteer near the finish line who helped me get back up and continue, truly grateful for that support. I would like to thank the entire team at Reliance Foundation, AFI, ASI, MRC and my training partners Gopi (Thonakal) and Man (Singh) for their constant support and belief in me," he added.

While Barwal finished in 20th spot, Gopi, the second Indian in the fray, clocked an impressive time of 2:13:16 seconds to finish 23rd. Ethiopia's Guye Adola won the race in 2:03:54 as he beat the challenge from teammate Tesfaye Deriba (2:04:15) and two-time Olympic medallist and two-time Rotterdam champion Bashir Abdi (2:04:19) of Belgium, who finished second and third respectively.

"The temperature here was hovering around the 15-16 degree mark. But Sawan's race got affected by the headwinds at the lakeside which came around the 37-40 km. From there on, it was a struggle to the finish line. He managed to get up and run after the first fall but soon he fell a second time. Together, it would have cost him around 90 seconds. But the volunteer came like an angel to lift him up. We later went and thanked him," Ajith Markose, Head Coach, Reliance Foundation Endurance Programme, told TOI from Rotterdam.

"He has been training for this race the last one-and-a-half years running 35-40 kms a day in two sessions. He was aiming to compete in the Valencia marathon in December but that didn't work out as he got injured," he added.

Next up for Barwal would be the Asian Games. If the new star can repeat his performance, Barwan can expect to climb the podium at Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, in September. China's He Jie won the gold at the 2022 Games in 2:13.02s.

Sinner wins, back as No.1

Jannik Sinner beat Carlos Alcaraz in straight sets to win the Monte Carlo Masters for the first time on Sunday and reclaim the world number one ranking from his Spanish rival. Sinner downed Alcaraz 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 to capture his third ATP 1000 title of the year after completing the "Sunshine Double" last month with victories in Indian Wells and Miami.

TENNIS

The 24-year-old Sinner joins Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal as only the third player to win four successive ATP 1000 titles. He also triumphed in Paris at the end of last season. "We came here trying to get as many matches as possible, getting good feedback before other big tournaments coming up. Today was a high level from both of us," Sinner said. "The result is amazing. Getting back to No.1 means a lot for me... I am very happy to win a big title on this surface, I haven't done it before and it means a lot to me."

Sinner, who is now 7-10 in his career against Alcaraz, will return to the top of the rankings Monday for the first time this year.

ANDREEVA FIGHTS BACK

Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva made the perfect start to her clay court campaign as she came from a set down to beat Anastasia Potapova 1-6, 6-4, 6-3 to land the WTA event in Linz on Sunday. AGENCIES

McIlroy, Young in lead

Rory McIlroy charged back late after squandering a six-stroke edge to share the lead with Cameron Young after a wild third round at the Masters on Saturday. A chaotic afternoon at Augusta National saw both men plunk key shots into water on the back nine but finish level atop the leaderboard on

MASTERS

11-under 205 through 54 holes, one stroke ahead of American Sam Burns.

McIlroy, who started the day with a record six-shot lead, carded a one-over-par 73 while Young roared into contention with a scintillating seven-under-par 65.

"I didn't have it today," McIlroy admitted. "I scrambled a lot on the front nine."

Second-ranked McIlroy birdied the 14th and 15th holes to regain the lead but found the trees off the 17th tee on the way to a bogey and his one-over round.

"This golf course has a way of, when you're not quite feeling it, you struggle," McIlroy said. McIlroy, a five-time major winner, hopes to match Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus and Nick Faldo as the only back-to-back winners of the green jacket. AFP

India secure runners-up finish

India finished runners-up at the ITF Asia U-14 Development Championships Finals in Colombo recently, with Puneeth Manohar and Srishti Kiran qualifying for the 2026 Wimbledon U-14 Championships. India were led by the Karnataka trio of Srishti, Padmapriya Ramesh Kumar, and Puneeth, alongside Punjab's Taanish Nanda. Fourteen nations competed in the event across two weeks, with India finishing second behind Chinese Taipei after leading in Week 1. Puneeth was among the standout performers, winning the boys' singles title in Week 1 and finishing runner-up in boys' doubles in Week 2. In the girls' category, Srishti reached both singles finals, finishing runner-up twice. Meanwhile, Padmapriya partnered with Srishti to be the girls' doubles runners-up in Week 1. The Karnataka trio also earned selection to the Grand Slam Player Development Programme (GSPDP)/ITF/ATF Europe U-14 development team.

Aikya emerges champion: Aikya Shetty walked away with the Swedish junior U-19 badminton title on Sunday. The Karnataka shuttler's opponent in the final, Xiaoyin Liang of

ROUND-UP

Sweden, retired after losing the opening game 17-21, helping Aikya emerge as the champion. En route to the title, Aikya survived two three-game contests against fellow countrywoman Srideetya Gurazada in the quarters, followed by England's Aahna Bhatia in the semifinal.

Richa stars for K'taka: Karnataka registered a comfortable 3-0 win over Assam in the U-13 National Football League in Punjab on Sunday. Richa Bhatia, who scored in the opening minute, added one more, while Subhathra A chipped in with a goal. Karnataka will face Mizoram in the semifinals on Tuesday.

Results: Karnataka 3 (Richa Bhatia 1, 13, Subhathra A 19) bt Assam 0.

Sanika, Mandara shine: Sanika and Mandara scored 18 points each to power Mysore A past Vivek's SC 86-48 in the State Women's Basketball league championship in Bengaluru on Sunday. Manasvi was the top scorer in the match, scoring 26 points for Vivek's SC. Mysuru, DYES, Vidyanagar, Beagles BC and Young Orion qualified for the semifinal league matches.

Results: Mysore District A 86 (Sanika 18, Mandara 18) bt Vivek's SC 48 (Manasvi 26, Ananya 11) HT 47-26; JSC 50 (Sanjana 23, Sharleen 11) bt Appaiah BC 24 (Hiranmayi 13) HT 24-12; Mounts Club 61 (Nilaaya 23, Pallavi 15) bt Bangalore Vanguards 37 (Siri 12) HT 34-16; Mounts Club 46 (Nilaaya 26, Pallavi 14) bt Vimanapura SC 42 (Shwetha 18, Shreya 11) HT 28-21; Young Orion's 57 (Abha 24, Sarayu 17) bt JSC 55 (Aadhya 21, Sanjana 10) HT 22-31; Mysore District A 65 (Sanika 26, Kusuma 19) bt DYES Vidyanagar 54 (Sheetal 17, Vibha 12) HT 26-33. TNN

TIMES NATION

'Intel alert': 3 J&K universities end MoU with US NGO

Srinagar: Three universities in Kashmir have terminated academic agreements with a US-based NGO, Kashmir Care Foundation (KCF), following internal reviews amid buzz that intelligence agencies had flagged concerns over its activities, **reports Naseer Ganai**.

University of Kashmir and Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir issued orders cancelling their MoUs with the Atlanta-based KCF on March 25; Islamic University of Science and Technology did the same the following day. Officials said the terminations followed "adverse reports", underscoring growing caution over collaborations with foreign instituti-ons, especially in technology, research, and data sharing.

University of Kashmir registrar Naseer Iqbal wrote to KCF president Altaf K Lal that the MoU was executed on Dec 15, 2025, "with the objecti-ve of furthering educational initiatives... The MoU has be-en reviewed by competent authorities and it has been det-ermined that continuation is not in the larger institutional interest of the university."Iqbal said the MoU had a termination clause. "We decided on our own to terminate it as we thought it was not advisable due to so many reasons," the registrar said, declining to go into specifics.

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NTA reviews JEE (main) keys after chemistry errors flagged

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The agency said that it has reviewed the provisional answer keys of JEE (Main) 2026 session 2 and made them available online, while acknowledging concerns over the April 5, shift 2 chemistry paper

New Delhi: Allegations of errors in the JEE (Main) answer key have again put the spotlight on the National Testing Agency (NTA), with the testing body stepping in early to review complaints and pause challenge payments for a disputed paper.

The agency said that it has reviewed the provisional answer keys of JEE (Main) 2026 session 2 and made them available online, while acknowledging concerns over the April 5, shift 2 chemistry paper. "Reports regarding discrepancies... are under verification," it said, advising candidates not to pay challenge fees until further clarification.

The provisional key and response sheets were released on Saturday, with the challenge window open from April 11 to 13 at Rs 200 per question. However, social media quickly saw a surge in complaints, with candidates and parents alleging "gross mistakes" and claiming multiple incorrect answers in chemistry.

A widely shared post urged the NTA to recheck the key, arguing that it was "practically impossible" for students to challenge a large number of questions while preparing for other exams. Faculty members also flagged concerns, with one Delhi-based govt college teacher writing to the authorities citing "major error" and student distress.

In one complaint shared with officials, a parent claimed that at least 11 answers were incorrect, warning that such errors could impact high-performing candidates, including those scoring above 99 percentile in earlier sessions.

Responding publicly, NTA director general Abhishek Singh said that he would personally have the paper reviewed by experts. "Given the large number of comments... I will get it checked," he posted, promising an update within a day. Answer key discrepancies have been a recurring issue for the NTA in recent years, often leading to court cases, re-evaluations, and in some instances, bonus marks. Previous editions of JEE (Main) and other national tests have seen multiple questions dropped or revised after challenges, fuelling criticism over quality control.

Rights on paper mean little if they can't be used, says CJI

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Dehradun: Chief Justice of India **Surya Kant** on Sunday said the real challenge before India's justice system lay not in the absence of rights but in ensuring those rights could be meaningfully exercised, warning that guarantees which remained only on paper amounted to little more than unfulfilled promises.

Speaking at the North Zone Regional Conference in Dehradun on enhancing access to justice, he said geography, infrastructure gaps and economic barriers still kept large sections of people away from the courts and institutions meant to serve them.

Launching the Nyaya Mitra portal at the two-day conference, the CJI said the effort must be to take justice to every doorstep in a form that was accessible, speedy and real. "A right that cannot be exercised in practice is nothing more than a promise made on paper," he said, underlining that the justice system would be judged not only by the rights it recognised but also by whether ordinary citizens could actually use them.

The conference was organised by Uttarakhand State Legal Services Authority in collaboration with National Legal Services Authority on April 11 and 12 under the theme "Access to Justice for All", with a broader focus on "Justice Beyond Barriers: Rights, Rehabilitation, and Reform for the Most Vulnerable". The discussions centred on the difficulties citizens faced in securing legal remedies, especially in places where terrain, distance and weak infrastructure limited institutional access.

The Nyaya Mitra portal, launched during the event, is meant to make justice-related services easier for the general public to access. The conference also aimed to strengthen the justice delivery system in Uttarakhand by reducing the barriers that prevent people in remote and underserved areas from reaching legal remedies. Uttarakhand HC Chief Justice Manoj Kumar Gupta said the justice system should be assessed not only by how it dealt with complex legal questions but also by how fairly and sensitively it touched the lives of ordinary people.

'Convene all-party meeting to discuss delimitation issue'

New Delhi: Congress chief **Mallikarjun Kharge** has written to PM Modi that he convene an all-party meeting after April 29 — the last day of current round of polls — to discuss the delimitation issue, linked to the women's reservation law, rebuffing his outreach to Congress in favour of amendments to the quota measure being brought in Parliament's special sitting from April 16-18, **report Subodh Ghildiyal & Kumar Rakesh**.

Parliamentary affairs minister Kiren Rijiju took up the cudgels on behalf of govt to reject Kharge's claims that BJP is eyeing political advantage amid the ongoing polls and that the governing alliance has not engaged with opposition parties. "If we don't act now, it is possible that women's reservation may not be implemented in time for 2029 (national) elections...," Rijiju wrote to Kharge defending the 3-day session from Apr 16.

In his reply to the PM, Kharge said govt has not shared details about "delimitation", and a discussion on the historic law would not be possible in absence of specifics.

PM to address Nari Shakti event today, ahead of Parl sitting on women's quota

New Delhi: PM **Narendra Modi** will address eminent personalities and women achievers from different sectors on Monday as he steps up his direct outreach to people to build support for bills proposing the implementation of women's quota in legislatures from 2029, amid critical voices from the opposition, especially over the likely delimitation exercise.

An official statement described the programme as "Nari Shakti Vandan Sammelan", similar to the quota law passed in 2023 named 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam'.

The bills, which Parliament is expected to take up on April 16 during a special sitting, propose to fix the implementation of the law, which provides for reservation of one-third of seats for women in Lok Sabha and assemblies, from the 2029 national elections.

"The programme will witness participation of eminent personalities and women achievers from diverse fields. It will bring together representatives from different sectors such as govt, academia, science, sports, entrepreneurship, media, social work and culture," the statement said. The event is being organised to reinforce the commitment towards greater participation of women in shaping India's development trajectory, it said.

With a united opposition in a position to deny govt the two-third majority needed for the passage of the constitutional amendment bill, especially in Lok Sabha, Modi has turned to mobilising public support to raise political cost for his rivals in case they turn against the move.

HC: Barring wife from kitchen is mental cruelty

Nagpur: Bombay HC's Nagpur bench has held that preventing a wife from entering her matrimonial home's kitchen amounts to mental cruelty under Section 498A of IPC, refusing to quash an FIR against a Nagpur-based man while granting relief to his mother, **reports Vaibhav.Ganjapure**.

Justice Urmila Joshi-Phalke said in a recent order that allegations against the husband made out a prima facie case. "She was even not allowed to enter the kitchen, and she was asked to bring the food from outside," court said, adding such conduct was sufficient to infer mental cruelty.

Section 498A covers "any wilful conduct... likely to drive the woman to commit suicide or to cause grave injury or danger to life, limb or health", including mental harm, and allows prosecution of husband or his relatives for cruelty. The case stems from a complaint by an Akola woman who married on Nov 29, 2022. She alleged frequent quarrels, restrictions on movement, denial of visits to her parents, being barred from cooking and forced to buy food, humiliation including throwing out her belongings, and pressure to seek divorce.

"I TOLD RICKY (PONTING) DURING THE STATEGIC TIMEOUT THAT I WILL GO WITH SHASHANK BECAUSE I NEED SOMEONE WHO BOWLS AT AROUND 120KPH. I NEED TO TAKE THE PACE OFF AGAINST HEAD AND ABHISHEK. HE SAID HE'D TAKE A WICKET AND HE DID THAT."
—Shreyas Iyer | PBKS captain

SALT MAKES IT SPICY FOR MI

Opener Blazes To 36-Ball 78; Patidar, Kohli Slam 50s As RCB Win By 18 Runs

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Mumbai: Riding on half-centuries from Phil Salt (78 off 36; 6x4, 6x6), skipper Rajat Patidar (53 off 20; 4x4, 5x6) and Virat Kohli (50 off 38; 5x4, 1x6), Royal Challengers Bengaluru downed Mumbai Indians by 18 runs in another high-scoring contest at the Wankhede on Sunday night.

Chasing 241, MI finished at 222/5, with 'Impact Player' Sherfane Rutherford unleashing a late assault. The West Indian smashed an unbeaten 31-ball 71, including nine sixes — four of them in the final over off fellow Caribbean pacer Romario Shepherd — but the carnage came a little too late.

What RCB produced with the bat was pure carnage — an innings studded with 18 sixes, leaving MI's fielders mere spectators on a hot and humid night.

The conditions took a toll on players from both sides. Kohli did not return to the field, while Rohit Sharma, who went past 6,000 runs for MI after completing 15 years with the franchise, retired hurt due to cramps after scoring 19 (13b). RCB pacer Rasikh Salam, who came in as an 'Impact Player', also struggled with cramps but managed to dismiss Naman Dhir (1) in the 16th over. MI skipper Hardik Pandya too went down on his knees briefly, though he returned to complete his spell (1-39).

Asked to bat first, RCB raced away to a formidable 240/4. Tim David provided the finishing touch with an unbeaten 34 off 16 balls (2x4, 3x6).

MI started their chase brightly, spinner but Suyash Sharma struck twice to remove Ryan Rickelton (37 off 22; 3x4, 3x6) and Tilak Varma (1), reducing them to 74/3. Hardik (40 off 22; 6x4, 1x6) and Suryakumar Yadav (33 off 22) sparkled briefly, but MI needed one of them to go deep.

The highlight of RCB's innings was Patidar's stunning blitzkrieg. The in-form batter brought up his fastest IPL fifty (17 balls).

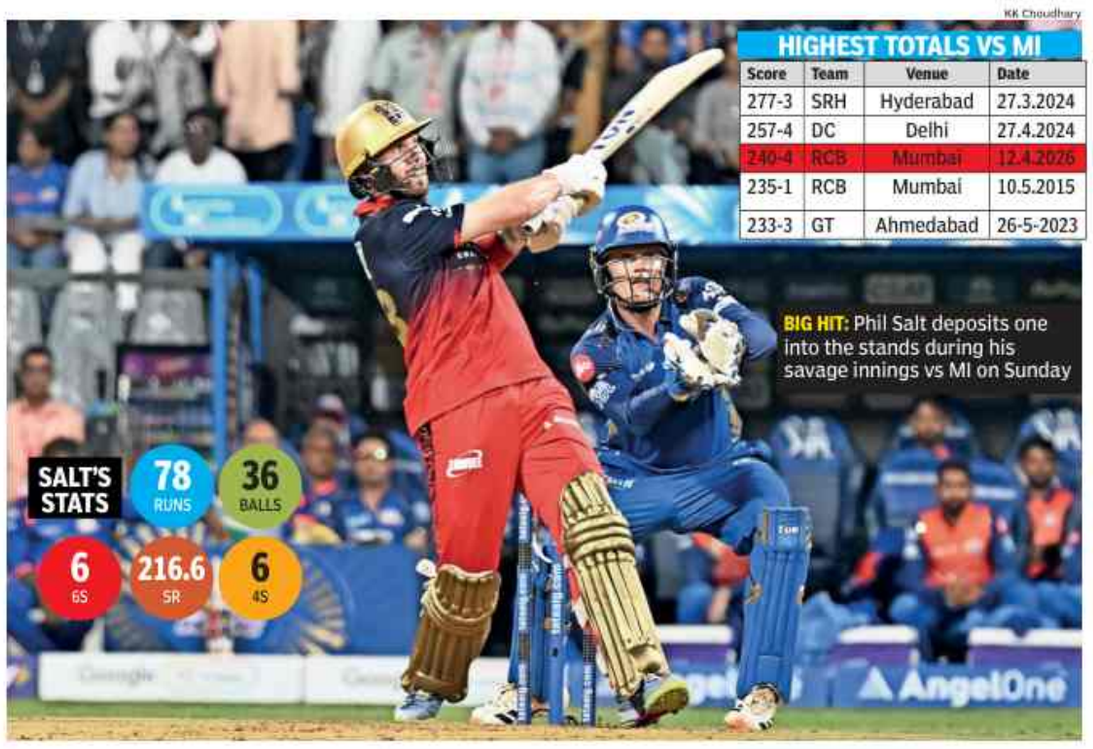
Walking in after the dismissing of Salt, Patidar went berserk — smashing 4, 6, 6, 6 off his first four balls. Patidar dominated a 65-run tand in just 23 balls with Kohli. MI's bowling unravelled under pressure. Attempting to bowl wide and short, they conceded 11 wides, with Thakur sending down six of them. Markande had a forgettable outing (0-40), while returning allrounder Mitchell Santner conceded 1-43.

78 Phil Salt has recorded his highest score for RCB, eclipsing the 65 vs RR at Jaipur on April 13, 2025 — his fifth fifty in 17 innings for RCB in the IPL. His first fifty in four innings vs MI is his eleventh in the IPL.

5 In five successive IPL matches between June 1, 2025 and April 12, 2026, Jasprit Bumrah has failed to take a wicket — a dubious distinction achieved by him for the first time in IPL.

Stats: Rajesh Kumar

KK Choudhary



BIG HIT: Phil Salt deposits one into the stands during his savage innings vs MI on Sunday

HIGHEST TOTALS VS MI

Score	Team	Venue	Date
277-3	SRH	Hyderabad	27.3.2024
257-4	DC	Delhi	27.4.2024
240-4	RCB	Mumbai	12.4.2026
235-1	RCB	Mumbai	10.5.2015
233-3	GT	Ahmedabad	26-5-2023

The bigger concern for MI, however, was Jasprit Bumrah's continued wicketless run. He returned 0-35, making it four matches in a row without a wicket this season. Including last year's second qualifier, Bumrah has now gone five IPL games without a wicket — a rare lean patch for the ace pacer.

Earlier, shrugging off a scratchy run of scores Salt, along with Kohli, lit up the Wankhede with a 120-run opening stand in 65 balls, setting the platform for RCB's imposing total.

SCOREBOARD

Royal Challengers Bengaluru: Phil Salt c Pandya b Thakur 78, Virat Kohli c Yadav b Pandya 50, Rajat Patidar c Tilak Varma b Santner 53, Tim David (not out) 34, Jitesh Sharma lbw b Boult 10, Romario Shepherd (not out) 2 **Extras:** (LB-1, NB-1, W-11) **13**
Total: (5 wkts; 20 overs) 240
FoW: 1-120, 2-185, 3-194, 4-231
Bowling: Trent Boult 4-0-50-1, Hardik Pandya 4-0-39-1, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-35-0, Mitchell Santner 4-0-43-1, Mayank Markande 2-0-40-0, Shardul Thakur 2-0-32-1.

Mumbai Indians: Ryan Rickelton c Kumar b Suyash Sharma 37, Rohit Sharma (retired hurt) 19, Suryakumar Yadav c Rasikh Salam b Pandya 33, Tilak Varma c Duffy b Suyash Sharma 1, Hardik Pandya c Shepherd b Duffy 40, Sherfane Rutherford (not out)71, Naman Dhir c Patidar b Rasikh Salam 1, Mitchell Santner (not out) 8
Extras: (LB-2, NB-1, W-9) **12. Total: (5wkts; 20 overs) 222**
FoW: 1-72, 2-74, 3-121, 4-145, 5-154
Bowling: Jacob Duffy: 4-0-58-1, Bhuvneshwar Kumar 4-0-38-0, Rasikh Salam 2.5-0-23-1, Krunal Pandya 4-0-26-1, Suyash Sharma 4-0-47-2, Romario Shepherd 1.1-0-28-0.

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Prasidh, the star in facile win for Titans

Gill, Buttler Slam 50s; LSG Suffer 2nd Home Loss

Fazal Khan | TNN

Lucknow: Gujarat Titans rode on authoritative half-centuries from captain Shubman Gill and Jos Buttler to beat Lucknow Super Giants by seven wickets with eight balls to spare at the Ekana Stadium on Sunday, sealing their second straight win while handing the hosts a second successive defeat at home.

Composed and in control, Gill and Buttler defused any pressure in the chase, keeping LSG on the back foot throughout and silencing a hopeful home crowd. Earlier, disciplined medium-fast bowling, led by Prasidh Krishna, ensured Gujarat restricted Lucknow to a manageable total after opting to field.

Gill anchored the pursuit with his 28th IPL fifty, also crossing the 4,000-run mark in the league with a boundary off Mohammed Shami. Buttler matched him stroke for stroke, bringing up his 26th IPL half-century while also completing 14,000 T20 runs and 100 fifties in the format.

Gujarat began steadily, with Gill and Sai Sudharsan adding 45 in 5.1 overs before Sudharsan fell. Gill then stitched a decisive 84-run stand off 58 balls with Buttler, effectively taking the game away from the hosts. By the time Gill departed at 129/2 in the 15th over, the result was all but sealed. Buttler fell soon after, but Washington Sundar (21n.o) and Rahul Tewatia (10) completed the formalities with ease. The result carried a touch of symmetry. Last year, on April 12, LSG had beaten GT at the same venue. This time, Gujarat returned the favour emphatically. Earlier, Lucknow recovered from early jolts to post 165 in 20 overs, a total that ultimately proved insufficient. Mitchell Marsh gave them a flying start with 11 off four balls before Kagiso Rabada struck in the second over. Rishabh Pant and Aiden Markram counterattacked, adding 31 off just 16 balls, but Pant's brisk knock of 18 ended in the fifth over.

Despite losing wickets, LSG recorded their best powerplay score of the season at 60/2. However, they failed to build on the platform. Markram made 30 but fell at 69/3, and Ayush Badoni soon followed, leaving the middle order exposed.

Nicholas Pooran and Abdul Samad attempted a rebuild with a 35-run stand, but the innings never gained momentum. Pooran fell to Prasidh Krishna at 109/5, with Gill taking a neat catch, and wickets continued to tumble at regular intervals. Samad's 18 lacked fluency, and Mukul Choudhary's dismissal at 131/7 further dented their hopes.

Krishna was the standout with the ball, finishing with four wickets and controlling the middle and death overs, while Rabada, Mohammed Siraj and Ashok Sharma chipped in with crucial breakthroughs to keep LSG in check. Shami played a cameo as did Linde but it wasn't enough.

Brief scores: Lucknow Super Giants: 164 for 8 in 20 overs (A Markram 30; Prasidh Krishna 4/28, Ashok Sharma 2/32) lost to **Gujarat Titans 165/3 in 18.5 overs** (S Gill 56, J Buttler 60; Prince Yadav 1/31).

4000 Shubman Gill, at 26 years 210 days, is the youngest batter to complete 4000 runs in the IPL — the 19th player to accomplish the feat — his tally being 4031 at an average of 39.91, including four hundreds and 28 fifties, in 118 innings.

Gujarat Titans' pacer **PRASIDH KRISHNA'S 4/28** vs LSG on Sunday are his best figures in T20 cricket

Sunil Kumar

RANA, RUTURAJ COP HEFTY FINES

Chennai: Delhi Capitals batter Nitish Rana was fined 25% of his match fee and given a demerit point after an altercation with the fourth umpire during their IPL clash against Chennai Super Kings in Chennai. Meanwhile, Chennai Super Kings captain Ruturaj Gaikwad was fined 12 lakh for a slow over-rate. PTI

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NR	NRR	P
RR	4	4	0	0	2.055	8
PBKS	4	3	0	1	0.720	7
RCB	4	3	1	0	1.148	6
DC	4	2	2	0	0.322	4
GT	4	2	2	0	-0.029	4
LSG	4	2	2	0	-0.427	4
SRH	4	1	3	0	-0.024	2
MI	4	1	3	0	-0.772	2
CSK	4	1	3	0	-1.532	2
KKR	4	0	3	1	-1.315	1

RR manager breaches ACU protocol, BCCI to probe incident

Guwahati: Rajasthan Royals team manager Romi Bhinder has landed in controversy after TV cameras showed him using a mobile phone in the dugout during the IPL match against Royal Challengers Bengaluru in Guwahati. The BCCI has taken note, with secretary Devajit Saikia saying the board will "thoroughly examine" the incident before reaching any conclusion.

A BCCI official confirmed this amounts to a breach of Players and Match Officials Area (PMOA) protocol, which bans mobile phone use in the dugout, though it is permitted in the dressing room.

Officials indicated that Bhinder, a long-time member of the franchise, was expected to be aware of anti-corruption guidelines. While the breach may have been inadvertent, action is likely. PTI

Overton's spell a breath of fresh air for CSK

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Chennai: Chennai Super Kings' first win of the season sparked debate over the 'Player of the Match' call. While Sanju Samson earned the award for his fluent unbeaten century, a strong case could be made for **Jamie Overton**, whose incisive spell proved decisive.

Overton's 4 for 18 on a batting-friendly surface was, for many, the real difference. Hitting hard lengths and cleverly varying his pace, the English allrounder removed key batters including Sameer Rizvi, David Miller, Auqib Nabi and Tristan Stubbs. His control—an economy of 4.50—brought much-needed bite to a struggling attack. The standout moment came in the 19th over, when he dismissed Stubbs with Delhi Capitals needing 30 off 12 balls, effectively sealing the contest.

What made the spell more remarkable was the context. Just days earlier, Overton had gone for 42 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, with Tim David taking him apart. The sharp turnaround underlined his resilience.

CSK bowling coach Eric Simons said resilience, along with the sense of security is what a bowler needs in modern T20 cricket to make a comeback.

"Resilience is perhaps one of the most important things you need to have and then it's important for a team to give safety to bowlers in the modern game. That means you're going to have bad performances, and it doesn't make you a bad bowler."

SRH brace for red-hot Royals

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Hyderabad: The city is bracing for a severe heatwave. Mercury has already breached the 40-mark and is rising. All that, however, will be lost on Vaibhav Sooryavanshi when he takes the field against Sunrisers Hyderabad, who are yet to get their bearings right in this edition of IPL.

Red-hot Rajasthan Royals are the in-form team going into the match at the Rajiv Gandhi International stadium on Monday and they owe quite a bit of their success to Sooryavanshi. He had a reputation to maintain coming into this edition and Sooryavanshi is doing it in great style, taking apart bowlers and attacks with the nonchalance of a 15-year-old.

Thanks to his marauding ways at the top in association with Yasashvi Jaiswal, Rajasthan have shown they are equally good at setting or chasing down totals. Factor in Dhruv Jurel's calm influence in the middle and it becomes clear why the Rajasthan top three dominate the Orange cap standings. That Sooryavanshi strikes at 266.66 is the reason why Rajasthan hurtle along like a burning train.

Abhishek Sharma also strikes at 218.64, but inconsistently so and that has impacted the Sunrisers, who must have realised by now that last year's template of a 200-plus total is no longer a safe bet.

From being the envy of the teams for breaching 200 for fun last season – SRH piled up 286/6, the second highest IPL total, in their last encounter against Rajasthan at this venue – the Sunrisers now see the payback is in the same coin. One year is a long time in sport and if anything, IPL is constantly evolving and the Sunrisers posted upwards of 200 thrice this year.

They successfully defended it against Kolkata Knight Riders to win by 65 runs – their only win so far in four matches – and watched as Royal Challengers Bengaluru and more recently, Punjab Kings, made short work of their totals. All of them were away matches for SRH, they were put in on all four instances, including their only match at home against Lucknow Super Giants, when they were undone by Mohammed Shami's craft.

Ishan Kishan was the hero with his 47-ball 106 in that high-scoring match between the two teams here last season —SRH won by 44 runs. If only the skipper can repeat that innings, it will give the Sun attack, which wears an unsettled look in the absence of Pat Cummins, something to bowl at.

WEATHER
32°C

NUMBERS GAME

4 Sunrisers Hyderabad have won the last four IPL fixtures against Rajasthan Royals — by four wickets at Jaipur on May 7, 2023; by one run at Hyderabad on May 2, 2024; by 36 runs at Chennai on May 24, 2024 & by 44 runs at Hyderabad on March 23, 2025. RR's last win over SRH was by 72 runs at Hyderabad on April 2, 2023.

Sanju's no-panic mode takes CSK back to the Dhoni days

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Chennai: The frustration had been building, but it has now vanished. One show of swagger from Chennai Super Kings' new recruit **Sanju Samson** against a competitive Delhi Capitals at Chepauk on Saturday has reignited belief in the camp.

Sanju's unbeaten 115 off 56 balls, his first major statement in CSK colours, showcased everything that makes him a prized T20 batter. There was no rush, no overindulgence in big hitting, no desperation to clear the ropes. Instead, he trusted his strengths, constructing a high-quality innings against a strong attack.

Not one for brute force, Sanju relied on timing and placement, striking nine boundaries in the Powerplay. His control and game awareness helped CSK snap a six-match Chepauk jinx and finally get their campaign moving.

The innings also marked a sharp turnaround. After failures in his first three matches, the pressure had begun to mount on the Kerala batter, who calls Chennai his "second home." But if there was tension, it never showed. CSK bowling coach Eric Simons underlined that composure, placing Sanju just a notch below MS Dhoni in terms of calmness.

"I've had the privilege of working many years with MS Dhoni, one of the calmest cricketers I've seen. Sanju isn't far behind," Simons said. "There's no panic, no urge to over-practise. When you have a player of his class, you know poor form is temporary."

Simons pointed to Sanju's self-belief as the defining trait. "It's something he has in abundance. Our job is to keep trusting him," he added.

That belief has served Sanju well before. At the recent T20 World Cup, he entered the XI late after a string of low scores but stuck to his natural game, reaping rich rewards with two consecutive Player-of-the-Match performances.

The move to CSK came with expectations. The franchise released long-time stalwart Ravindra Jadeja to bring him in — a decision that underlined their faith. Sanju admitted it was important to repay that trust. "After the trust CSK showed in me, it was important to deliver so we stay in contention," he said. "It's never easy starting with a new franchise, but I never felt that here. It's like a second home."

Sanju is no stranger to setbacks and believes those phases have shaped him. "I have failed a lot, but failure teaches you how to come back," he said.

GALLERY

INDIA GET SAVITA BOOST

Star goalkeeper and former captain Savita Punia will return to the national women's hockey team after 10 months but indisposed skipper Salima Tete, suffering from chicken pox, will be missing from action when India take on Argentina in the first game of the four-match series in Buenos Aires on Monday. The tour will serve as the ideal preparation for India ahead of FIH Nations Cup, FIH Hockey World Cup Belgium & Netherlands 2026, and the Asian Games later this year.

Super subs seal win for Bagan: In a drama-filled ISL game, Mohun Bagan fell behind twice but found in two substitutes, Sahal Abdul Samad and Jason Cummings, the makers of two game-defining moments on way to edging past Punjab FC 3-2 at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata on Sunday, reports **Nilesh Bhattacharya**
In Lucknow, Inter Kashi edged past Mohammedan SC.

Aarit becomes youngest Indian IM norm holder: Delhi's Aarit Kapil became the youngest Indian chess player to make an International Master norm while Shivika Rohilla became a Woman International Master following a final round draw with IM Rudolf Sertic in the first Saturday chess tournament.

Crippa, Demise claim victories: Italy's Yemaneberhan Crippa won the Paris marathon on Sunday, while Ethiopia's Shure Demise claimed victory in the women's category. The Ethiopian-born Crippa, 29, clocked a personal best of 2hr 05min 19sec for the win in the French capital. The women's race saw 30-year-old Demise smash the course record by more than a minute. She won in 2:18:34 ahead of compatriot Misgane Alemayehu (2:19:08).

Harman ready for 'unfinished business'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: After a landmark 2025, **Harmanpreet Kaur** & Co head into the season with the T20 World Cup in England on the horizon. As captain, she leads an Indian women's cricket team returning to familiar shores, chasing the chance to rewrite history.

The upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup carries emotional weight. England

CAPTAIN SPEAKS

was the scene of India's near miss in the ODI World Cup in 2017, which they lost to the hosts by nine runs.

The final at the Lord's reshaped women's cricket in the country and instilled belief. Returning to England as ODI world champions, is there a sense of unfinished business? "Definitely," admitted Harmanpreet. "The last year gave us a lot of confidence. We'll go in with a positive mindset and try to give our best."

For Harmanpreet, this is a full-circle moment. Nearly a decade after 2017, the venue remains the same, but the context has changed. She now leads a side that blends experience with belief.

Under her leadership, the rise of women's cricket in India has mirrored her own journey — from a young power-hitter in 2009 to a figure now spoken of alongside Kapil Dev and MS Dhoni as an ODI World Cup-winning captain.

"I never thought people would put me alongside th em," she said. "It's an honour. I always wanted to be part of a change where women's cricket keeps moving forward."

THE WPL EFFECT

The influx of young talent has added depth to the Indian dressing room, much of it shaped by the Women's Premier League.

"Girls coming in are very well prepared because of the WPL," the Indian skipper

stated. "They've already experienced high-pressure cricket. We don't need to give them confidence — they know the kind of cricket they want to play," added the middle-order batter, speaking to TOI on the sidelines of the Puma x Hyrox event here.

For Harmanpreet, the game itself has evolved from pressure to privilege.

"A few years ago, I really felt the pressure," she admitted. "Now it's a privilege. I'm living my dream. The hard work is done — it's about enjoying every moment."

COE'S ROLE

Behind the results lies a transformation in preparation. The BCCI's Centre of Excellence (COE) in the city has significantly raised training standards.

"It's an amazing facility," Harmanpreet said. "It has everything we need to improve. Last year's results show that the system is working."

THE HARMANPREET STAND

Recognition has followed success. A stand at the PCA Stadium in Mullanpur now bears her name. "It's a great feeling," she said.

"I never imagined I'd have a stand named after me. But it shows that years of hard work do pay off." The honour is another marker in a remarkable career — one that continues to evolve.

—Kaushal Kumar V & Jia Khosla

Sindarov a draw away from glory

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Nagpur: Youngest World Cup winner Javokhir Sindarov is just a draw away from Candidates' glory. The 20-year-old Uzbek Grandmaster made an effortless draw with World No. 2 Hikaru Nakamura in the 12th round of the Candidates Chess tournament in Cyprus on Sunday.

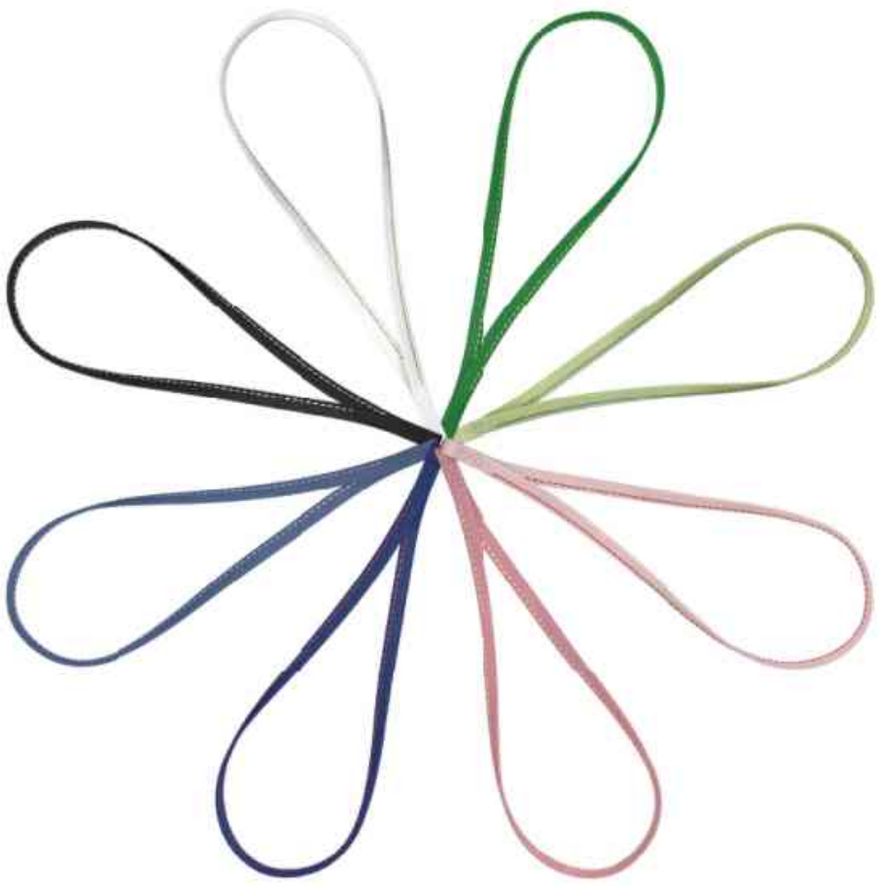
CHESS

In the 13th round, Sindarov will be defending with his black pieces against his nearest rival Anish Giri. In the last and 14th round, Sindarov will be playing with the white pieces against Chinese Wei Yi.

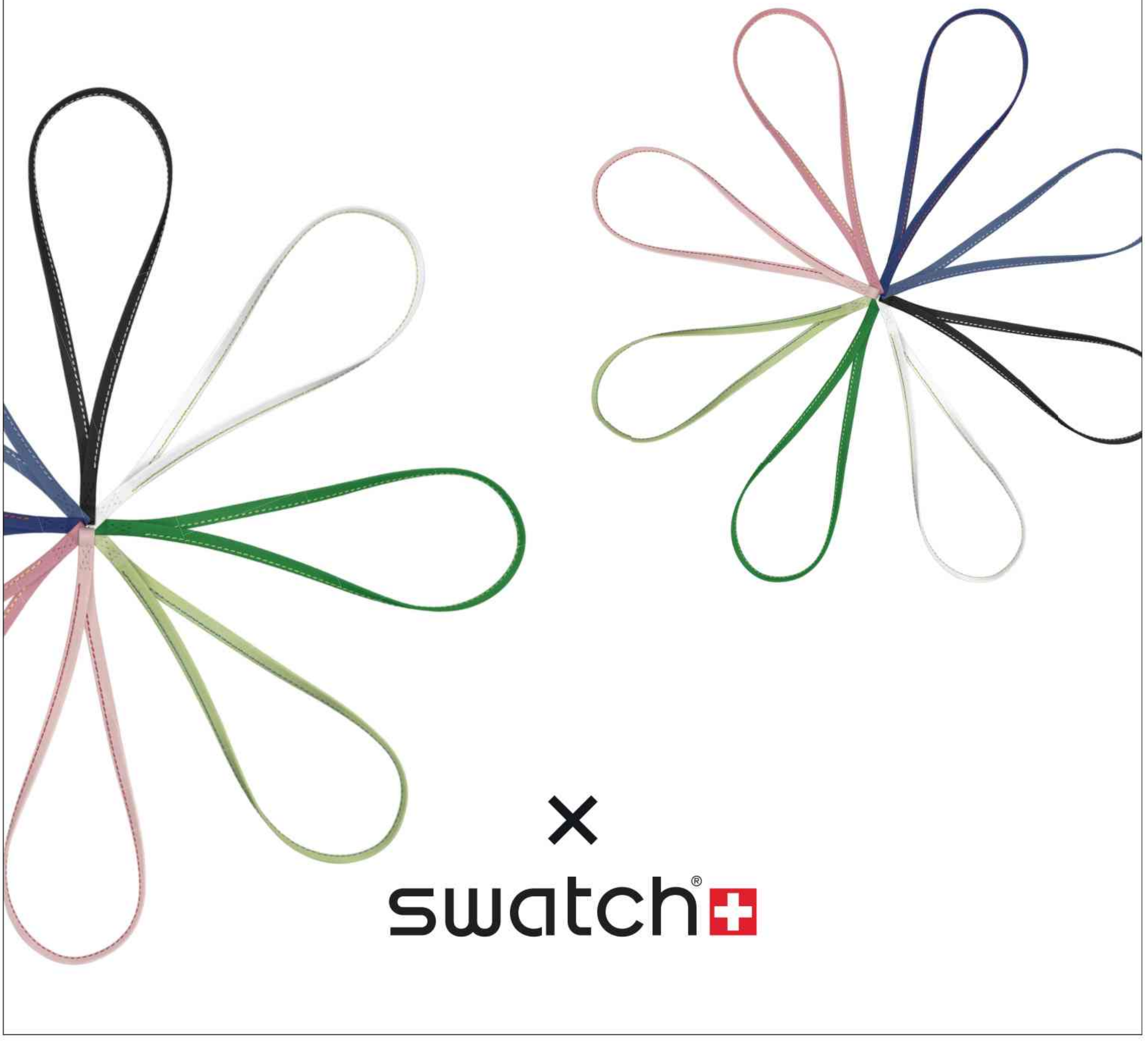
In the 12th-round top-board action, Sindarov picked the English Opening with Anglo-Indian, Queen's Knight Variation against Nakamura. With two rounds remaining, the World Cup winner took his tally to nine points to continue his unbeaten run. Sindarov's nearest rival, Dutchman Anish Giri failed to break the defensive Chinese wall of Wei Yi to secure a draw and is now two points behind. Even if Giri wins all his remaining rounds, Sindarov will need to draw his next two games to clinch the title and emerge as the challenger to India's youngest world champion D Gukesh – setting up a Gen Z clash.

VAISHALI LOSES

In the women's group, tournament leader Vaishali Rameshbabu suffered a 39-move defeat against China's Zhu Jiner. Despite the defeat, Vaishali shares the lead on top with Zhu.



The real WONDERS are happening in May.



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Hungary's long-serving far-right PM Viktor Orban concedes defeat as rival Tisza party looks set for a 2/3rds majority, with projections giving it around 135 out of 199 seats in parliament

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TIMES GLOBAL

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2026

LUCK IS A DIVIDEND OF SWEAT. THE MORE YOU SWEAT, THE LUCKIER YOU GET — RAY KROC

SABRINA CARPENTER APOLOGISES FOR MOCKING A FAN'S 'ZAGHROUTA' AT COACHELLA, CITES CONFUSION & LACK OF CULTURAL AWARENESS

HEATHER GRAHAM SAYS H'WOOD CHANGED HER IMAGE: 'MY CLASSMATES DISMISSED ME AS NERDY AND SMART, NOBODY CONSIDERED ME PRETTY'

Nuclear mistrust, Hormuz sink Vance's peace mission

Tehran Defends 'Legitimate Interests', Says US Couldn't Gain Iran's Trust

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Tehran and Washington are returning to a crisis and confrontation mode – at the expense of the rest of the world – after US Vice President JD Vance returned home empty-handed from his mission in Islamabad aimed at subjugating Iran into giving up its nuclear programme.

After almost a full day of talks in Pakistan, Vance acknowledged failure, striking a characteristically blunt note before he left Islamabad for Washington DC. "We've had a number of substantive discussions with the Iranians. That's the good news. The bad news is that we have not reached an agreement," he said in the early hours of Sunday, after all-night parleys with the Iranian delegation. "I think that's bad news for Iran much more than it's bad news for the US," the US veep added cryptically, underscoring the asymmetry of consequences that is seen as a warning to Tehran.

Vance said Tehran had rejected Washington's "final and best offer," though he left the door ajar for future talks, before the two-week cease-fire expires on April 22. "We leave here with a very simple proposal: a method of understanding that is our final and best offer. We'll see if the Iranians accept it," the US veep said without providing specifics.

Iran, however, painted a very different picture of the impasse with its parliament speaker and leader of the delegation Mohammed Bagher Ghalibaf, saying "the US was unable to gain the trust of the Iranian delegation in this round."

Esmaeil Baqhaei, spokesman for Iran's foreign ministry, said in a post on social media that the talks spanned a wide range of issues — from the Strait of Hormuz and the nuclear question to sanctions relief, war reparations and a comprehensive ceasefire — but hinged ultimately on Washington's willingness to recognise what Tehran called its "legitimate rights and interests." These rights include a civilian nuclear programme that Iran is entitled to as a signatory to Nuclear Proliferation Treaty.

Vance reiterated that Washington demands an "affirmative commitment" that Iran will neither pursue nuclear weapons nor retain the capacity to develop them. "We need an affirmative commitment — they will not seek a nuclear weapon, now or long-term. That's President's core goal," he said. Iran has long insisted it does not seek nuclear weapons — a position it maintains is consistent with both its strategic doctrine and prior international commitments — but refuses to relinquish what it considers its sovereign right to a civilian nuclear programme.

A second fault line ran through regional security, particularly Iran's network of allied West Asian groups like Hezbollah and Houthis. US officials pressed for curbs on Tehran's support for such proxies in Lebanon and elsewhere, demands Iran dismissed as "excessive" and beyond the scope of the current crisis.

The most combustible disagreement, however, centred on the Strait of Hormuz. Iran has sought a greater degree of control over the international waterway, framing it as a matter of regional sovereignty and security. Washington, backed by allies and partners, views any such move as a direct threat to energy supplies and global economic stability.

Tehran also pressed for the unfreezing of its overseas assets and raised claims for war reparations — demands Washington was unwilling to entertain in the absence of broader concessions. The failure of the talks casts immediate doubt on the durability of the tenuous ceasefire. While neither side formally declared an end to the ceasefire, the absence of progress — coupled with hardening rhetoric — suggests that renewed confrontation is a distinct possibility.

Vance's comments hinted at a belief in Washington that time is on its side. By stressing that the outcome is "bad news for Iran much more" than for the US, he signalled confidence that economic pressure and military deterrence will eventually force Tehran back to the table on US terms. Iranian officials, by contrast, appear prepared for a prolonged stand-off, betting that geopolitical realities will constrain US options.

Adding a layer of surreal contrast to the diplomatic drama was President Trump's own schedule. Even as Vance was engaged in negotiations, Trump flew to Miami to attend a Ultimate Fighting Championship event bout — a spectacle critics often liken to choreographed brutality. Earlier, he had struck a tone of airy nonchalance in Washington, declaring the outcome of the talks largely irrelevant. "We win, regardless. We've defeated them militarily," Trump said.

The juxtaposition — peace talks and prizefighting — captured the paradox of a moment in which diplomacy and brinkmanship collide, with consequences that could reverberate far beyond the region.

5 POINTS ON WHICH TALKS BROKE DOWN

- **400 kg** Fate of 'near-bomb-grade' uranium remains unresolved
- **$27 billion** Dispute over release of Iran's frozen assets
- **6 weeks** Who pays for damage from weeks of air strikes?
- **0 delay** US wants strait of Hormuz fully open immediately
- **2 weeks** Scope of truce unclear – does it cover Lebanon or not?

Iran says it has full control of Hormuz

Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) on Sunday said Iranian security forces had the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping bottleneck, under full control. "The enemy will become trapped in a deadly vortex in the Strait if it makes the wrong move," IRGC said, after President Trump ordered a US naval blockade of the Strait. Separately, IRGC's navy said Sunday that military vessels approaching the Strait of Hormuz "will be met with a firm and forceful response," according to two semi-official Iranian news. AGENCIES

'Civilisation will die' post forced Iran to talk: Trump

Washington: President Trump on Sunday said his "civilisation will die" remarks brought Iran to the the now failed peace talks. "That statement got them to the bargaining table, and they have it left. They have left the bargaining table. I predict they come back and they give us everything we want," he told Fox News programme 'Sunday Futures'.

On April 7, Trump had threatened that the US forces would wipe out the "whole civilisation" and demanded that Iran open up the Strait of Hormuz. On Sunday, Trump tried to justify his remarks. "When I say about a civilisation, it really has changed. But think of it: they're allowed to say, "Death to America, death to this, death to-" you know, I make one statement, they say, "Oh, such a big deal"," Trump said. PTI

Campaign against Iran not over, have more to do: Bibi

Jerusalem: Claiming "historic achievements" in the fight against Iran, Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu said in a video statement on Saturday that the "campaign is not yet over". "We still have more to do," Netanyahu said. "We went into the campaign because Iran was very close to nuclear weapons and the capability to produce hundreds of missiles per day. Two existential threats that we had to remove," he asserted.

Separately, in another video, Netanyahu said that Israeli forces had eliminated the threat of an invasion by Hezbollah militants during a visit to troops in southern Lebanon. He said the operations helped in "containing the danger of rocket fire" from Hezbollah targeting northern Israel. AGENCIES

Man climbs over US air force plane in Ireland, held

London: Police in Ireland on Sunday said officers had arrested a man who entered "an unauthorised area" of Shannon airport, as social media footage appeared to show a man climbing onto a US Air Force plane. The Shannon hub facilitates the movement of US troops.

The footage posted on X showed a figure apparently on top of what media reports said was a C-130 Hercules aircraft. The intruder appeared to be striking the fuselage. "An adult male was arrested for alleged criminal damage," a police statement said. He remained in police custody on Sunday, police added. AFP

Now, Trump threatens China with 50% tariffs if it sends arms to Iran

AFP

Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli airstrike in Lebanese city of Nabatieh on Sunday. Lebanon's health ministry said the toll since the start of the war between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah is now 2,020

Washington: US President Trump said his threat to impose 50% tariffs on goods from countries that sold weapons to Iran was aimed at China.

Trump told Fox News' "Sunday Morning Futures" that has heard reports of China giving anti-aircraft "shoulder missiles" to Iran. He played down the possibility of China supplying weapons to Iran, but said their goods would be taxed if they did. "I doubt they would do that, because I have a relationship, and I think they wouldn't do that, but maybe they did a little bit at the beginning," Trump said. "But if we catch them doing that, they get a 50% tariff."

CNN reported late on Friday that US intelligence indicates China is preparing to deliver new air defence systems to Iran within the next few weeks, citing three people familiar with recent intelligence assessments. The network said there are indications Beijing is working to route the shipments through third countries to mask their origin. China is preparing to transfer shoulder-fired anti-air missile systems known as MANPADs, CNN said. REUTERS

Putin and Pezeshkian discuss failed talks with US

Russian President Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian discussed the latest developments in West Asia in a phone call Sunday, the Kremlin said. Pezeshkian briefed Putin on the US-Iran talks held in Pakistan and thanked Moscow for its position "aimed at de-escalating the situation," the Kremlin said in a statement. It also said Putin had "emphasised his readiness" to help bring about a diplomatic settlement to the hostilities. AP

Will ceasefire hold? West Asia braces for more tension

Doha: A sense of dread spread across West Asia after talks between the US and Iran collapsed, as fears of renewed fighting rattled an already tense region. Questions about what would come next and whether the two sides would continue to respect a two-week ceasefire was anybody's guess as both the Iranian and American delegations departed Pakistan without a deal.

"Things could change at any moment," said Aishah, a 32-year-old consultant based in Doha. "It's more about taking each day as it comes."

The failure of the talks however did not surprise many. "I didn't have a lot of hope for them going in, because the two sides want completely opposite things," Laura Kaufman, a 38-year-old school teacher in Tel Aviv, told AFP. "There didn't seem to be anyone willing to actually negotiate."

A recent poll found that only 10% of the Israeli public believe the war against Iran had constituted a "significant success, compared to 32% who view it as a failure". "I really wanted them to make peace," said Mahsa, a 30-year-old employee of an export company in Tehran. "It's been almost 45 days now that I've seen everyone stressed. It's a bad situation."

Elsewhere, the talks' failure only seemed to guarantee more uncertainty. "I am worried about the return of attacks again, because they were causing me tension," said Imam, an Egyptian housewife living in Abu Dhabi. "I was making a great effort not to pass my tension on to my children." AFP

Hormuz blockade will hit India, China, Japan, S Korea

▶Continued from P1

While Trump himself has said the US will not be affected by the closure since it does very little business through it, a blockade will have serious economic consequences for China, India, Japan, and South Korea, each of which imports more than 50% of its energy needs through this waterway.

Indeed, while the blockade will strangle Iran's oil revenues, it will also affect energy exports from Washington's allies such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and UAE, while allowing energy-rich US to profit from the crisis, something Trump has openly boasted about.

Reuters

IN TROUBLED WATERS

"At some point, we will reach an "ALL BEING ALLOWED TO GO IN, ALL BEING ALLOWED TO GO OUT" basis, but Iran has not allowed that to happen by merely saying, "There may be a mine out there somewhere," that nobody knows about but them. THIS IS WORLD EXTORTION, and Leaders of Countries, especially the US, will never be extorted," Trump said. He announced that he has instructed the US Navy to "seek and interdict every vessel in International Waters that has paid a toll to Iran". "No one who pays an illegal toll will have safe passage on the high seas," he added.

While there is no clear evidence that specific countries are officially paying Iran tolls, there are reports of a murky, ad hoc system where individual ships or shipping companies — sometimes linked to certain countries — have quietly paid for safe passage. In any case, there was no toll system or extortion or a blockade of the straits, which accounts for 20% of the global energy flow, before Israel and the US attacked Iran.

In a first, insurgents attack Pakistan coast guard boat, 3 personnel killed

Quetta: Separatist insurgents killed three Pakistan coast guard personnel on Sunday in the first-ever attack on one of the maritime authority's patrol boats operating in the Arabian Sea, security officials said.

Intel and police officials said the boat was on a routine patrol in a coastal area close to the Pakistan-Iran border when the militants opened fire

Intelligence and police officials said the boat was on a routine patrol in a coastal area close to the Pakistan-Iran border when the militants opened fire and killed three on board.

The incident adds to security challenges in Balochistan, a flashpoint of insurgency where armed groups have frequently targeted security forces and infrastructure. Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) claimed responsibility for the attack. "Following the operations on land, the action in maritime boundaries marks a new development in the BLA's military strategy," the BLA said in a written statement.

Authorities have launched an investigation and security has been heightened in the area, said the intelligence and police sources. Pakistan carried out airstrikes in Feb that sparked a weeklong conflict with Afghanistan. Islamabad blames Kabul for providing safe haven to militant groups including the BLA to plan and coordinate their attacks on Pakistan. The Taliban govt has denied the accusation.

Gwadar, an important district with a strategic deep-sea port that is a key node in China's ambitious flagship "Belt and Road" infrastructure initiative, has seen repeated attacks on security forces and installations by Baloch separatist militants. Authorities did not respond to requests for comment about the incident. REUTERS

Techie from Andhra drowns in Missouri river on b'day outing

Nalla.Babu@timesofindia.com

Software engineer Singireddy Sai Sree Hari Krishna, 26, from Andhra Pradesh drowned Saturday in the Meramec river in Missouri, US, while celebrating his birthday with friends at Meramec State Park near Sullivan.

Hari Krishna, from Piridi village in Vizianagaram district, and his friends checked into a resort on Saturday. He later entered the river for a swim and got trapped in underwater weeds that caught his legs and pulled him down, officials said on Sunday. He struggled, went under and did not resurface. Crews from the Sullivan fire department later pulled out the body, according to Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Hari Krishna went to the US in 2023 after completing BTech from a private college. He did his master's in engineering and recently joined Elessent Clean Technologies in St Louis, about 130kms from Sullivan. Youngest of three siblings, he is survived by two married sisters and his parents — auto-rickshaw driver Srinivasa Rao and primary health centre employee Ramadevi.

Residents of Piridi said he had called his parents days earlier, promising to send money to buy a small plot and build a house. Family approached a state minister seeking help to bring his body back from the US.

China sets up new county in Xinjiang near POK

Beijing: China has set up a new county in its Xinjiang province near Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) and the Afghanistan border in an apparent move to beef up security along the narrow Wakhan Corridor to curb infiltration by Uyghur separatist militants. The county, named Cenling, is located near the strategic Karakoram mountain range.

This is the third county established by China in Xinjiang in over a year. Last year, India lodged a protest with China over the creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating parts of their jurisdiction fall within Ladakh

This is the third new county established by China in Xinjiang, a predominantly Uyghur region, in just over a year. Last year, India lodged a protest with China over the creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating that parts of their jurisdiction fall within its Union territory of Ladakh. It will be administered by Kashgar prefecture, according to a report in the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post.

The Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region govt announced the establishment of Cenling on March 26, though details of its administrative divisions and exact boundaries were not specified. It will be administered by Kashgar prefecture, according to a report in the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post. Kashgar, located on ancient Silk Road, is a gateway connecting China with South and Central Asia. It is also the starting point of the $60 billion CPEC. PTI

Pakistan to get $5bn aid from Saudi Arabia, Qatar

Islamabad: Cash-strapped Pakistan is set to receive $5 billion in financial support from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, providing a critical buffer for its fragile external position, according to a media report on Sunday. The expected inflows come at a crucial juncture as Islamabad prepares to repay $3.5 billion to the UAE this month and faces pressure on its foreign exchange reserves, Dawn newspaper said.

The development coincides with finance minister Muhammad Aurangzeb's visit to Washington to attend the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings and advance Pakistan's economic diplomacy. Aurangzeb will participate in the meetings scheduled from April 13 to 18, where he is expected to hold talks with officials of the IMF and the World Bank.

Policymakers view these interactions as part of a broader strategic outreach, with indications that traditional factors such as strict programme conditionalities or reliance on third-party guarantors, including the UAE, may carry less weight in the current context. The IMF has stipulated that Pakistan's three key bilateral creditors — Saudi Arabia, China and the UAE — must maintain their cash deposits with the country until the completion of the ongoing three-year programme. It seems the UAE will be replaced by Qatar, Dawn report said.

Saudi Arabia remains a major source of concessional financing for Pakistan, having rolled over deposits amounting to $5 billion so far. Pakistan has said it will repay $3.5 billion to the United A by the end of April, a liability that had been rolled over since 2018. PTI

China says will resume some ties with Taiwan

Bangkok: China said Sunday it would resume some ties it had suspended with Taiwan such as direct flights and imports of Taiwanese aquaculture products following a visit by the Beijing-friendly opposition leader of the island.

The Taiwan Work Office under China's Communist Party issued a statement saying it would explore setting up a longstanding communication mechanism between the Communist Party and Taiwan's Kuomintang Party.

Cheng Li-wun, the head of the Kuomintang, and China's President **Xi Jinping** held a high-profile meeting Friday during which they called for peace, without offering specifics. China claims the island as part of its territory and Beijing hasn't ruled out the use of force to annex it.

Taiwan's mainland affairs council, which oversees the relationship with China, said the measures that were announced, such as promoting a communication mechanism, were "political transactions" between the two parties that circumvented govt of Taiwan.

"Govt's position is clear: to ensure the interests of the nation and its people, all cross-strait affairs involving public power must be negotiated by both govts on an equal and dignified basis," the mainland affairs council said.

Relations between China and Taiwan, which remain split since 1949, have been tense since the election of pro-independence President Tsai Ing-wen from the Democratic Progressive Party in 2016. Beijing cut off most of its official dialogue with Taiwan govt. AP

WORLD DIGEST

Nigerian airstrike hits market, 200 feared dead in Yobe

At least 200 people are feared dead after Nigerian military jets struck a village market while pursuing militants in the northeast of the country on Saturday night, a councillor for the area and residents said on Sunday. Nigeria's air force said it had killed Boko Haram militants in the Jilli axis in Borno state, but in a statement released to Reuters on Sunday it did not mention hitting a market. It did not respond to further requests for comment. The strike occurred in a village in Yobe on the border with Borno, the heartland of a long-running insurgency.

Youtuber arrested for criticising Nepal PM, released after protests

A journalist, who was arrested on charges of using abusive language against Nepal PM Balendra Shah 'Balen' on his YouTube channel, was on Sunday released following criticism and objection by Gen Z activists. Roshan Pokharel, who ran the YouTube channel 'Hades,' was arrested on Thursday. .

Haiti fort stampede kills at least 30: Report

A stampede at an historical fortress in Haiti has killed at least 30 people, a govt minister said on Sunday. Citadelle Henri, also known as Citadelle Laferriere, is a 19th-century fortress and popular tourist spot. It is a Unesco World Heritage Site.

Record turnout in Hungary election that could oust Orban, rattle Russia

Budapest: Hungarians voted on Sunday in an election that could end PM Viktor Orban's 16-year hold on power, rattle Russia and send shockwaves through right-wing circles across the West, including President Trump's White House.

Orban, a eurosceptic nationalist, has carved out a model of an "illiberal democracy" seen as a blueprint by Trump's MAGA movement and its admirers in Europe. But many Hungarians have grown weary of Orban, 62, after three years of economic stagnation and soaring living costs, along with reports of oligarchs close to govt amassing more wealth.

AFP

Women in traditional Hungarian dresses at a polling station in Veresegyhaz

Opinion polls have shown Orban's Fidesz party trailing Peter Magyar's upstart centre-right opposition Tisza party by 7-9 percentage points, with Tisza at around 38-41%. Pollsters predicted a record voter turnout, and data at 3pm GMT showed over 74.2% of voters had cast their ballots, up from 62.9% at the same time in the 2022 election. Magyar, after casting his vote in Budapest, said Hungarians would write history as they choose "between East and West," and urged voters to report any irregularities.

Magyar expressed confidence about the outcome, saying the only question was whether Tisza won a simple majority or a two-thirds majority in the 199-seat parliament that would allow it to amend Hungary's constitution.

Orban, who cast his vote in the same Budapest district and swept the last four elections, told reporters: "There is a constitution in Hungary and it needs to be followed. The decision of the people needs to be respected." The vote is being closely watched in Brussels, with many European Union peers criticising Orban, who has kept close ties with Russia and is a Trump ally, over what they say is an erosion of Hungary's democratic rule, media freedom and minority rights. An Orban defeat would deprive President Putin of its closest ally in the EU, while for Ukraine it could mean the release of a $105 billion EU loan vital for its war effort that the Hungarian leader has been blocking. Reuters

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